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MEMOIRS OF THE EMPRESS EUGENIE

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MEMOIRS
OF THE
EMPRESS EUGENIE
VOLUME II

Eugenie

MOIRS OF THE EMPRESS EUGENIE

BY COMTE FLEURY

COMPILED FROM STATEMENTS, PRIVATE DOCUMENTS AND PERSONAL LETTERS OF THE EMPRESS EUGENIE FROM CONVERSATIONS OF THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON III AND FROM FAMILY LETTERS AND PAPERS OF GENERAL FLEURY, M. FRANCESCHINI PIETRI, PRINCE VICTOR NAPOLEON AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COURT OF THE SECOND EMPIRE

"The documents and conversations contained in these two volumes are, to my best knowledge, authentic."

C^TE FLEURY

VOLUME II

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CHAPTER I

ORIGIN OF THE CRIMEAN WAR

When the Prince-President was proclaimed Emperor of the French and had been recognized as such by the chief powers of Europe, the Emperor of Russia, acknowledging Napoleon's official announcement of the fact, saw fit to alter somewhat the style of address always used between sovereigns. In the official letter delivered to the Tuileries court by the Russian ambassador, Count Paul Kisseleff, Napoleon, instead of being addressed as "Monsieur mon Frère" (Sire, my brother), the form employed among sovereigns, was addressed as "Monsieur et Bon Ami," (Sire and Good Friend), which was the form used when writing to the President of the Republic. This modification was not without importance and caused a considerable amount of surprise in imperial circles at Paris. As Napoleon well said on one occasion, "its effect was to give a sort of accidental and transitory stamp to the character of Russia's recognition of the new government; it was rather shutting out the new ruler from the circle of European sovereigns." At the same time, with considerable astuteness, the Czar Nicolas, who was hiding his hand and biding his time, treated the French ambassador to St. Petersburg, General de Castelbajac, with the greatest cordiality. The French government took up the matter, which was

discussed in the Cabinet Council where opinion was divided as to the advisability of noticing it. Here is the inedited memorandum of the subject from the pen of M. Achille Fould, who may be said to have been the head of the Cabinet at this time:

"M. de Persigny was very much excited and quite angry over 'this slight to which France has been subjected in the person of the Emperor.' He urged that 'the Russian letter be returned to the sender.' But, in the opinion of his colleagues and of the Emperor himself, it was considered wiser that no official notice be taken of this apparent snub. The Emperor said very quietly: 'If we were to take offense and endanger the peace of the nation, I could be accused of thinking too much of my own person and too little of the best interests of the country.' The Emperor having spoken, his view of the matter was accepted. M. Baroche held—and I shared his view—that the whole thing was only an affair of etiquette and should not be taken too seriously. It could only hurt the Czar in the eyes of Europe and would in no way harm France or the Emperor. Then M. de Persigny returned to the attack, saying: 'I agree with the Emperor that it would be most unfortunate if a serious difference were to occur between France and Russia over a matter personal to him; but I feel, nevertheless, that the insult to France is greater than to the Emperor. If the Emperor is not a true sovereign and if his peers do not accept him in the same degree that they do other sovereigns, it is a denial of the nation's right to freely exercise her own rights, and to choose her own form of government. Where you see simply a question of etiquette, I perceive symptoms of auda-

cious hostility which will soon show themselves more plainly and in matters of more importance. Though I yield to the wish of the Emperor and the Council, mark my word, we shall have a war with Russia on our hands in the near future. Get ready for it; for having once wounded us with impunity, why should the Czar Nicolas be more lenient with us than he was with Louis Philippe? In his pride, does he not think that all things are possible? But as the Empire, in one respect at least, does not resemble the July Monarchy, I am proud to say, the first time that Russia is insolent to us, war will come.' "

Count Kisseleff learned what had taken place at the council of ministers, and, as was his custom, smiled at what had been said, and especially at the comments of M. de Persigny. He was always surrounded by a circle hostile to the young empire and judged the government as it appeared through their spectacles. He said to a friend: "The government is incapable of firmness and I am certain that if, by chance, the Emperor should show a tendency to greatness and glory, his immediate circle would soon stifle any such ambition." Thus the prestige of the act of December 2nd, which had just had such a powerful effect on the imagination of the masses, did not reveal to all Europe the real character of the Second Empire. The Emperor well said later, referring to this episode: "According to these old-fashioned diplomats, who were, however, supposed to be accustomed to analyze the living forces of States, it was not, in this case, the strong roots of the newly but deeply planted tree which could give an idea of the future growth of that tree, and reveal its real vitality. They spent their time and

questionable talents in examining the little defects in the tree,—its gnarls, its knots and the cracks in the bark. They didn't take their short sighted eyes off the trunk, and even then they didn't see under the bark!"

At another time the Emperor said: "The Czar Nicolas never suffered an occasion to escape to let us see his proud and haughty spirit. After the pin-pricks came the real complications brought about by the disputes over the holy places of Palestine. He seized this opportunity to show his audacity, when there was danger of our having complications at home. Since France had obtained from Turkey what we much valued, viz. the right to protect the priests and monks of Jerusalem, Russia sought to secure by way of compensation, a similar right for the schismatic Greeks, that is to say, for over half of the subjects of the Ottoman Empire! This was stirring up the Eastern Question with a vengeance! This was something more than a mere matter of etiquette, and it caused a great sensation throughout Europe. We in Paris called a special cabinet meeting to consider what was to be done. I favored sending a fleet to Salamis there to await the turn events took. On this same occasion we drew up the grand lines of the speech which the minister of foreign affairs, M. Drouyn de Lhuys, was to pronounce before the Legislative Body.

"The memorandum that I made at the time contains this outline of this speech: 'After giving a sketch of Russia's whole policy for a century and having pointed out each step which she has taken in the direction of gratifying her large ambition, the Minister was not to hide the fact that, at last in our

opinion, the limit had been reached, and that we were now prepared to act. He was further to point out that the Turkish Empire had fallen into a lamentable condition, that great effervescence prevailed among the Greek and Slavonian peoples, that revolt was in the air and that the Mussulman part of the population was not in a position to oppose any serious resistance to attack from these disturbed quarters. Russia, on the other hand, was a great and strong power, who was not going to put up with anything from Turkey. She had gathered an important fleet at Sebastopol, which was ready to put to sea and carry an army to the very gates of Constantinople. Everybody knew that Russia was looking for an excuse for interfering in Turkish affairs, especially if this could be done all alone, without having the rest of Europe interfere, too. If the right were given her to act as the protector of the Greeks throughout the Turkish Empire, she would certainly seize this as the occasion for making a prompt and formidable descent on the Bosphorus. Left to her own resources and unsupported by the rest of Europe, Turkey would surely be attacked by Russia, and if attacked, would of course succumb.' Such were the main topics to be touched upon by the minister.

"From another quarter we learned that the Czar had told Sir Hamilton Seymour, British Ambassador to St. Petersburg, that 'the catastrophe is imminent, but I will not allow Constantinople to be occupied by Russians, French, English, or the subjects of any other power. I will especially not suffer the resurrection of the Byzantine Empire, nor an extension of Greece. Still less will I permit Turkey to

be divided into a lot of small states which will become a sort of fief of Mazzini, Kossuth, and other revolutionary agitators of that ilk.—'Then,' we were told the ambassador replied, 'your Majesty will have to make it understood that no one will be allowed to seize on any of the provinces of the Turkish Empire; that the whole territory will be as though seals were put upon it,—at least until some friendly arrangement shall be arrived at.'—'This will be difficult,' continued the Czar, 'for Christians and Turks will quarrel.' 'Your Majesty is always thinking of Turkey's ruin,' added Sir Hamilton, 'while we are ever trying to prevent her from falling any lower.' 'You speak like Nesselrode,' replied the Czar, 'but you may be sure that the catastrophe will come, and sooner than some people imagine!'

"We also learned that other powers were mentioned during this memorable conversation. 'I don't worry about France,' said the Czar, 'her one idea is to get us into a quarrel. But if I can keep on good terms with England I don't care for the rest.' 'And Austria?' asked the British diplomat, if we were rightly informed. 'What suits Austria, suits Russia,' was the response. The Czar, it appears, was not very severe on the Sultan in this memorable exchange of views. He was referred to as 'the gentleman who has broken his word.'—'But, sire,' said Seymour, 'if those poor Turks did not keep their word, it was because they feared France.' Throughout the interview, the Czar showed himself particularly desirous of being friendly with England; and in exchange for British good-will, he was ready to offer many things,—such as free action in Egypt and Candia. Seymour is reported to us to have an-

swered 'with seeming indifference' that 'all the English want is to have an easy route of communication between the home country and India.' The Czar closed with these words: 'Write to your court, but remember that I am not asking for a treaty but for a gentleman's word of honor.'

"I know that this proposal did not appeal to Lord Clarendon, who had succeeded Lord John Russell at the British Foreign Office. We had private advices to the effect that he spoke in the same strain as his predecessor, repeating that England did not consider Turkey's end to be so near as the Czar seemed to think; that wisdom required that the present order of things be maintained, and that if any unexpected change arose a congress could settle the question, even if it were that of the division of the booty. Nesselrode, too, showed more circumspection than his master. Through our ambassador at St. Petersburg we learned that he did not at all think the question of the sharing in the spoils was yet ripe, though he did feel that it might be well to draw up some terms of agreement in case of any serious event.

"The Russian ambassador to France seemed to show bitterness in his conversations,—we well knew this fact at the Tuileries—only when he was speaking of France. He was in the habit of using very strong language when he referred to 'the rôle of France in the Orient, where she gives her orders through the cannon's mouth.' On another occasion the ambassador said: 'In the dispute over the Holy Sepulchre, France brought such pressure to bear on the Porte as to have annulled certain promises made to the Czar.' We all felt that the ambassador con-

ducted himself in this wise in order to separate us from England when it was found that no direct assistance could be obtained from that power. All this was not made public till much later; but we got wind of enough of it to convince me that the Czar could not be depended upon. It was not my custom to speak of matters of this kind with the ambassadors to the Tuileries, but I made an exception in this instance, and Lord Malmesbury, the British Minister of Foreign Affairs, heard much of all this through his ambassador in Paris, or in direct conversation with me on the occasion of visits. Finally, the whole intrigue came out in an English blue book. In the meanwhile, Nicolas was preparing to 'speak.'

"When, at the end of February, 1853, Ozerof, the Russian representative in Turkey, informed his colleagues of the diplomatic corps that an extraordi nary envoy of the Czar was shortly to arrive at Constantinople, there was great surprise, which became greater still when it was known that this special ambassador was none other than a distinguished Russian admiral, Prince Mentchikoff. Our representative at the Turkish court sent us queer details about this remarkable personage. He landed on March 1st, and the next day, attired in a simple morning suit, went to the Sublime Porte, and then, after seeing the Grand Vizir refused to put foot in the apartments of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Fuad Effendi, because 'he had shown partiality for France in the affair of the Holy Sepulchre.' This caused a veritable scandal. But instead of being offended, the Sultan turned Fuad Effendi out of office and put Rifaat Pacha in his place. These acts caused all the

more nervousness in Constantinople from the fact that the British ambassador was absent on leave and our own ambassador, the Marquis de la Valette, who had been recalled, had not been given a successor. Our chargé d'affaires, Benedetti, was very apprehensive, and informed me that his colleague, Colonel Rose, the British chargé d'affaires, wrote his government to the effect that Prince Mentchikoff's mission was threatening the independence, if not the very existence, of Turkey. Thereupon, the commander of the British fleet in the Mediterranean was ordered to sail into the archipelago. This act, I remember, caused considerable alarm in business circles in Paris, and the quotations on the Stock Exchange fell several points. It was rumored that Russia was seeking to get recognition of her protectorate, undefined but certain, over the Greek church; and at the Tuileries, we knew that there was only too much ground for this rumor. At a Cabinet meeting, Drouyn de Lhuys was immediately instructed to declare that we protested against the way Prince Mentchikoff was conducting his mission. My memorandum runs: 'His object appears to be not to negotiate but to present an ultimatum. The concentration of forces in central Russia and the extraordinary preparations which are being made at Sebastopol do not permit us to doubt for a moment that the St. Petersburg cabinet considers possible the event of a war with the Porte. In this connection, it might be well to remind the Russian government of the convention of 1841 in which the Powers, collectively, guarantee the independence and integrity of the Turkish Empire. But the mission of

Prince Mentchikoff seems to violate completely both the spirit and even the letter of that important document.' "

The French minister of Foreign Affairs made this statement on March 21st, and two days later, the new French Ambassador to Turkey, M. de Lacour, left for Constantinople with instructions couched in language somewhat similar to that just given above. The French government began to prepare for any event, and on the 23rd, the fleet left Toulon. The following extract from a letter sent the Empress by a member of the French embassy at London shows how the situation was looked upon at this moment in official circles on the other side of the Channel. This letter read:

"In England no one seems to think danger imminent. The question of the Holy Sepulchre, which has excited our Catholic population, has found Protestant England indifferent, at least for the moment. The English fleet is not to leave Malta and Lord Clarendon tells us he has written Count Walewski that the orders given to the French fleet appear to him to be a little hasty. He has tried to minimize the bad impression produced throughout the British Isles by the way in which Mentchikoff insulted Fuad Effendi. At first, the English press was anything but kind towards us, blaming the French government for taking measures which 'would inflame matters.' Again, some of the papers have said: 'If England did not think the moment propitious for picking up the gauntlet, we do not see exactly why France has been so quick to take offense at these odd goings on of this eccentric Russian. This all seems to us over here to be playing into the hands

of Russia, who continues to make, through Nesselrode, most tempting promises to Seymour, the object being to separate England and France.' We learn that when Seymour asked Nesselrode recently: 'Except concerning the question of the Holy Sepulchre, have you any complaints to make of the Porte?' his reply was: 'No, only a few private claims, which are not beyond easy arrangement between friendly powers.' Nesselrode is not considered here in London, to be the accomplice of his master, entirely, and we doubt if he really knows the secret thoughts of Nicolas, who seems to have revealed himself wholly only to Mentchikoff. Nesselrode has even gone further and has we learn, written to Count Brunow, who, your Majesty will remember, is Russia's representative here, saying that the Russian government is not seeking any aggrandizement and has no desire to seize the Balkan Provinces. The only thing the Czar wants is a fair arrangement concerning the matter of firmans in favor of the Greeks and Latins. He spoke very well of us, I understand, but differentiated the point of view of England from that of France and complimented the British cabinet on the fact that it did not share the fears of the Tuileries!"

Several years later, when the Emperor was speaking one day on this uncertain period before the outbreak of the Crimean war, the Empress showed him the letter which has just been given; whereupon, he made this comment thereon: "Lord Clarendon was evidently taken in by these fine speeches of Nesselrode. When Walewski told him what Benedetti wrote us from Constantinople, he said: 'Colonel Rose tells us the same thing. But there is no ground

for worry. It is simply a matter of the Holy Sepulchre!' But, nevertheless, an order had been given to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe to return to his post at Constantinople, where he had the greatest influence and where he was not a *persona grata* to the Russians. When he got back there at the beginning of April, 1853, he found Constaninople in a most agitated state, the Turkish ministry very nervous and the diplomatic corps exceedingly apprehensive."

Another memorandum left by the Emperor concerns this mission of Prince Mentchikoff, and runs as follows: "He offered the Sultan a Russian alliance on condition that the Czar be recognized as the legal protector of all Turkish-Greek subjects. The Balkan Peninsula and the Ottoman Empire contained more than 12,000 Greeks. How was it possible for the Sultan to consent to such a stipulation? He consequently refused, and, on May 20th, as was to be foreseen, since France and England supported him, he rejected the ultimatum. Prince Mentchikoff could not have expected anything else and so was ready for action. The diplomat, now turned admiral, hastened to this ships, and latent hostilities began, the Russians at once occupying the principalities of Moldavia and Dalmatia, as far as the Danube. From that moment, France and England openly supported Turkey and their fleets occupied the Dardanelles. There was no declaration of war, however, though Russia was given to understand that she would not find it so easy as she imagined to put her foot with impunity on the Ottoman Empire. The central powers were also awake, and the result of their reflections was quite different from

what had been expected at St. Petersburg. Austria had been accused of ingratitude for having refused to ally herself with Russia, and Prussia which was more disposed to do so, was held back by fear of incurring Austria's displeasure. So Russia was absolutely isolated, and we consequently hoped that the mediation of the western powers would suffice to prevent the threatening hostilities. At the Tuileries, we especially held this view. Though we desired to obtain from Russia certain concessions, and did not hesitate to speak firmly and plainly we did not wish for a great European war. We were forced more than were the other powers to have regard for our influence in the Mediterranean, and as France had then but recently reëntered the monarchial concert, her duties and interests were of a varied nature. Her dignity required her to play an important part, to firmly protest when necessary and always to speak in a clear tone, still, she had also to be certain of being backed by allies, to act only in agreement with the other powers and not to draw the sword until she had exhausted every means of conciliation.

"England, ruffled by Nesselrode, had openly protested against his policy, and favored my position. It was therefore by common consent that the two fleets were sent into Grecian waters. That was all that was done for the moment. In the meanwhile, Austria and Prussia suggested that a conference be held at Vienna. This proposal was accepted by the four powers. But we all felt at the time that but little was needed to change this state of armed neutrality into a state of active hostility. On February 27, 1854, Queen Victoria and myself sent the Czar

a courteous message requesting him to evacuate the principalities, and to respect the integrity of the Ottoman empire. We were much grieved when Nicolas refused to listen to our gentle remonstrance. The Czar could not have been ignorant of the fact that if he wished to avoid war, he must take a backward step and make concessions. He refused, however, to do so. The rights of nations had undoubtedly been violated, and that meant war, as was soon evident when my own and the Queen's messages were read in our respective parliaments. As the powers had blamed the Czar's attitude, I could not hold back from participation in active measures, for which I was not responsible. M. de Persigny spoke strongly before the ministers on the necessity of our not abandoning our allies; and of course we could not do so. I was not in favor of this war, but we were left no choice. I took that view at the time, and I have never ceased to hold the same view. In fact, I do not think I exaggerate when I say that all reliable historians of this conflict and of all countries now share this same opinion. But such was not the case in some quarters at that epoch nor since. But hatred of me and my régime cannot pervert the facts of history, at least in the long run.

"The proposed war was highly popular in France. This assertion has very often been denied, but with no good ground for proof. Many Frenchmen said, and not without reason, that the struggle would show the greatness of our army, and give the country a still more prominent position in Europe. In spite of some of the shortcomings which resulted therefrom, it would be untruthful not to admit at this late date that the Crimean expedition was glorious

in many particulars. It was at a later period that reasons were discovered to cast a cloud over that expedition, to remember only its bloody disasters and dearly-won victories and to seem to forget the necessity for the struggle and the many fine acts of heroism to which it gave rise. But this is too often the course pursued in France towards governments, and fallen régimes. History rises above party politics and gives each one his due. The new generation of historians, both in France and England, is now doing us all justice, and with the coming years everybody will be treated with fairness, I feel sure. Such thoughts are a great solace to me in these darker days, and that they are not mere chimeras, others besides myself are convinced."

I must confess that the Empress watched with considerable anxiety all the preparations for this war, which something seemed to tell her would be serious and long. All considered the appointment of Marshal de Saint Arnaud to the supreme command on the French side as excellent; and if it had not been for the heart disease which carried him off in the midst of his brilliant career, I do not think France could ever have praised him too much. The Emperor always had faith in this general's ability and greatly mourned his untimely loss. The Empress felt so about it that she would have liked to see the war end with his death. It was at her suggestion, by the way, that an avenue and bridge of Paris were named after the great battle which he won.

It will be remembered that Canrobert took over the command left vacant by the departure and death

of Saint Arnaud. He had some difficulties with Lord Reglan, but what finally decided him to resign the command was the evil effects produced by "General Bosquet's jealous nature." I do not care to say how much or how little ground there was for this charge, for all knew the talents of both of these excellent soldiers. But I know it to be a fact that Canrobert was largely influenced in his unfortunate decision by what he at least considered the jealous feelings of General Bosquet. Under the circumstances all thought it very fine of Canrobert to ask to be given the command of a simple division, and I consider that he showed very sound judgment in suggesting that he hand over the commander-in-chiefship to General Pélissier. Here belongs a memorandum by the Emperor, which bears on these various points.

"General Pélissier was as decided and energetic as Canrobert was hesitating; and as abrupt in his manner as Canrobert was conciliatory. He was no doubt a great commander but he had a bad temper. I feared he would look askance at orders coming from Paris, and I soon found that I was not mistaken. We quickly got into trouble with him and for a time I seriously thought of going to the Crimea in person in order to straighten matters out. Lord Clarendon's arguments had not a little to do in bringing me around to this view. The able head of the British Foreign Office met me at Boulogne, at the Queen's command, and we had a long talk over Franco-English relations. My best advisers at home—Morny, Persigny, Drouyn de Lhuys, and Fleury—also opposed with good arguments my leaving the country. Pianori's attempt on my life

also had its influence. The Empress, although she took no part in the discussion of the matter, let me see that she felt that my determination was unwise. Eugénie's opinions always carried weight with me, especially in this instance, when she would have had to act as regent during my absence. At one time, I thought seriously of removing Pélissier and putting General Niel in his place. I always had a high idea of Niel's talents, his carefully worded reports from the front appearing to me to be models of documents of that kind. But Marshal Vaillant and General Fleury persuaded me to leave Pélissier where he was. Perhaps I did well to yield, for Pélissier showed real ability, despite certain criticisms which I was forced to indulge in. When, on September 10, he planted the tricolor flag on the deserted ruins of Sebastopol, only congratulations could be sent him, and those were sent with sincere feelings of thanks. It was now possible to treat for peace, which I very much desired. I learned that England would have liked to continue the struggle, crush Russia and thus incapacitate her for long years. I wished, however, to spare Russia and negotiate. My view finally prevailed."

The Empress was not only opposed to the Emperor going in person to the Crimea, but, as the reader has already surmised, she was opposed at heart to this whole expedition; and when the treaty of Paris put an end to the struggle, she felt that her view was not far from right; for one day the Emperor said: "Well, Russia restores Kars, cedes a part of Bessarabia and the mouth of the Danube, gets Sebastopol back again, accepts the neutralization of the Black Sea and abandons her claim to a

protectorate over Christians in Turkey. But was this worth the terrible waste of life and treasure caused the four allied powers, to say nothing of the equally great losses to Russia, in blood and money? I fear not."

CHAPTER II

THE ITALIAN WAR

The Empress had received from the Emperor full powers to act as regent during his absence on the Italian campaign. The home situation at this moment was remarkably calm. Political parties were well disposed towards one another, an era of good will seemed to have dawned on the country and there appeared to be no desire to please foreign powers by arousing intestine troubles. At the end of May, 1859, parliament was dissolved and the Empress received the high ministerial and legislative dignitaries. The president of the Senate spoke very friendly words on this occason and especially touched her by referring to "the beloved child, our country's hope," adding, with an evident expression of real feeling: "In the absence of the Emperor, each one of us is pervaded by a deeper sense of attachment for the cherished persons whom he has entrusted to the patriotism of Frenchmen." The Empress replied, saying that she was particularly pleased to perceive "this desire to see the Prince Imperial, which, along with the good counsels of my well loved uncle, King Jerome, give me new courage and fresh strength in these trying circumstances." Comte de Morny, president of the Legislative Body, said, among other things, that "though the Emperor's absence may have caused some anxiety to those who do not know

France, still our nation, which is so generous and tactful, is characterized by the greatest delicacy of feeling, so that the departure of the Emperor to share the dangers of our soldiers and defend the honor of the flag, awakens in all Frenchmen still greater respect for your authority, if this were possible, and warmer affection and attachment for your person." As the Count shook hands with the Empress, on leaving, he said warmly: "You may rely, Madam, on the support of us all and you may be sure that we entertain towards you the sentiments which you have the right to expect as Regent and Mother." Eugénie answered that she knew full well that "Frenchmen would never fail in their duty towards a woman and her child."

The fact that a war was in progress did not change the outward appearance of Paris in this beautiful spring and early summer of 1859. There was much animation everywhere throughout the city, as is always the case at this time of the year, notwithstanding the fact that the "season" was over. Each day at the fashionable hour, the drive round the lake at the Bois de Boulogne was crowded with handsome equipages and brilliant riders. All classes of society were most optimistic as regards events at the front. The thought of a possible defeat did not even enter the head of Parisians at that moment. They found pleasure in recalling the names of the different cities and villages of Italy made famous by French victories in past wars and pinned miniature flags on the maps of the seat of the conflict, thus following the progress of the campaign, which they were sure would soon be over. The nation, infatuated by the Crimean successes, considered itself invincible, yet

we know now that we had more than once a narrow escape from defeat. In fact the Empress did not share this feeling of optimism and general self-complacency. She could not help thinking of the many bereavements, of the many losses which must happen in the ranks of that valiant army. She thought of the mothers and the daughters, of all those who would be stricken through the death of officers and soldiers. She had always been much opposed to this war, fearing its consequences, the difficulties of all sorts which were sure to spring therefrom, the ambitions which it would awaken in strengthened Piedmont, in liberated Italy, the risks which the Holy See would run and all the latent dangers of the whole Roman question. But putting behind her all these somber forebodings, the Empress devoted all her thought and energy to her duties as regent.

After the departure of the Emperor for the seat of war, the Empress settled down with the Prince Imperial and a small suite at St. Cloud, where she lived in great retirement, engaged in studying all the political questions as they arose. Every week there were three cabinet meetings, two of which took place at the Tuileries. The last two she did not attend, but the one held at St. Cloud, she presided over. Though there was considerable labor in all this, Eugénie felt no evil results therefrom; on the contrary, this new sort of work seemed to agree with her and the excitement of politics gave her a freshness of feeling which she had not experienced since she came to the throne. In the evening there were select gatherings at the quiet St. Cloud circle, attended chiefly by Count and Countess Walewski, the Mar-

quis de Cadore, the ladies of the palace and a few chosen friends from the Tuileries group. Making lint for the wounded was the chief occupation at these reunions, while the conversation turned almost ceaselessly on the subject of the war. News from the front was impatiently waited for, and when, in the afternoon of June 5th, the Empress received a telegram from the Emperor, the callers crowded impatiently and tremblingly around her, while she read these words: "Here is the result, as far as we know, of the battle of Magenta: at least 7,000 prisoners, some 20,000 Austrians disabled, three cannon and two flags taken. Our losses are about 3,000 men killed. To-day the army is resting and reorganizing." It was a great relief to all present when the Empress had finished reading, with quivering voice, these lines. At eight in the evening salvos of artillery informed the inhabitants of Paris of the grand victory, and an hour later, the Empress decided to show herself to the people; so, accompanied by Princess Clotilde, who, it will be remembered, was the daughter of Victor Emmanuel, and had married in the previous January Prince Napoleon, Eugénie drove in an open carriage through the Boulevards and along the Rue de Rivoli. They were everywhere greeted with ovations, while all the public and many of the private buildings were finely illuminated. Two days later, the Empress directed that a solemn Te Deum be sung at Notre Dame in the presence of herself, of King Jérome, Princess Clotilde and Princess Mathilde. It was a memorable event, never to be forgotten. French and Sardinian flags brightened the streets, which were filled with soldiers and joyous crowds. The theaters joined in the rejoicing. Méry

composed a song suitable to the occasion, Auber set it to music and it was sung in master-fashion by Gueymard at the Opera. The same song was repeated at the Opera Comique, with a topical play by Saint Georges, the dramatist, for which Halévy furnished the music. This piece was entitled "Italy," and the dramatis personæ were a French officer, a veteran of the Grand Army, a zouave and an Italian peasant woman. The chorus and solos were enthusiastically received by a delighted public, representatives of the court, present at the Empress' direct request, leading in the applause. All Paris was holiday making.

The Emperor was ever-mindful of the regent at home. Before leaving Milan, he sent one of his staff officers back to Paris, with the two Austrian flags taken at Magenta. Lieutenant Colonel Schmidt reached St. Cloud on June 13th, and the Empress always held the day in happy remembrance. She embraced the envoy in the presence of the little court and questioned him concerning all the details of the memorable battle. The whole circle was much affected. A little later, on June 24th, a still deeper emotion was produced in the quiet retreat by the coming of another telegram from the faithful Emperor, giving this account of the battle of Solferino: "Great fight and great victory. The Austrian army has surrendered. The line of battle stretched along for five leagues. We carried all their positions and have taken many guns, flags, and prisoners. The battle lasted from eight in the morning till eight at night." The Empress was in bed when the telegram was handed to her. But she immediately arose, dressed, sent messages to several persons, went

down into the grounds and informed the sentinels and the troops of the good news. The soldiers were, of course, uproariously delighted at the glorious event, and warmly cheered the Empress, the Emperor and the Prince Imperial, who was quietly slumbering in the palace.

June 25th was another great day for Paris, and the Empress felt prouder than ever at being for the time the official head of such a nation and such a capital; and to more than one prominent statesman she revealed the thoughts that took possession of her. Later, one of these statesmen wrote to Eugénie: "Your high opinion of our common country and of our Gallic race moved me almost as much as the magnificient victory of our dear Emperor. How thoroughly your Majesty has penetrated into all that is best in France and in the French. Your grand words are a *sursum corda.*" On July 2nd, Major d'Andlau brought the Empress the Austrian flags captured in the recent battle, and the 3rd was chosen for a second Te Deum. This time, the Empress decided to take the Prince Imperial with her to the great ceremony. The child was delighted at the proposal and on this occasion began to show that keen interest in public events, though but three and a half years old, which was so largely developed in him when he reached manhood. He put several questions to his mother and his attendants which surprised them not only by their number, but also by their nature.

The weather was splendid and the event was magnificent in every respect. In the open carriage, at Eugénie's side, sat the Prince Imperial, and opposite Princess Clotilde and Princess Mathilde,

sister-in-law of Princess Clotilde. The landau was surrounded by a bevy of high officers, whose fine uniforms and prancing steeds greatly interested the child. The Prince Imperial never forgot that ride from the Tuileries to Notre Dame. In fact, he used to say that he believed it was the first great event of which he had a distinct recollection. The shower of nosegays and flowers which fell into the carriage was also a delightful souvenir, to both mother and child, of that superb manifestation of French patriotism.

One of my close friends has left this manuscript account of what followed at the church: "On the threshold of the cathedral, the Cardinal Archbishop of Paris, surrounded by all his clergy awaited the Empress, who entered the grand old edifice holding the Prince Imperial by the hand. The latter was attired in white piqué and wore a blue sash. The Imperial party was conducted in state to the gorgeous platform prepared for them in the center of the nave, surrounded by the big stone pillars which were covered with red velvet bordered and embroidered in gold. On every hand were French and Sardinian arms, flags, banners and pennons. On leaving the church, General de Lawoestine in the name of the cavalry of the national guard of the Seine, offered the Empress a magnificent bouquet of flowers and a crown of golden laurels with pearl clasps. The return to the Tuileries was one long and continuous ovation. The Empress not only appeared to be much moved, but she told me immediately afterwards that she had never in her whole life been so stirred to the very soul. Indeed, the war was victoriously ended, the Imperial power was at its height and the whole nation rejoiced in the charming young

prince, heir to the throne now so solidly established."

On the day of this great Te Deum at Notre Dame de Paris in thanksgiving for the victory of Solferino, the Emperor, who had just crossed the Mincio river, was joined by Prince Napoleon at the head of the fifth army corps. With these and other troops, the Prince was to occupy Tuscany, where serious disturbances had arisen, the beginning of a long series of such troubles. Since the end of April, 1859, Florence had been in a state of revolution. The insurrection had been long prepared by Signor Buoncampagni, Minister of Sardinia in Florence, and the event had come off without bloodshed. The Tuscan troops were taking to the Italian colors, and the Grand Duke Leopold had left his capital without causing the slightest stir, so indifferent were the inhabitants to him and his acts. The secretaries of the different foreign legations accompanied him to the station, and all thought matters would right themselves soon. The Grand Duchess told Comte de Rayneval, Secretary of the French Legation and he sent on the message to the Tuileries, that "she relied on the Emperor's protection."

Prince Napoleon landed at Leghorn on May 23, 1859, and found awaiting him the French Minister at Florence, the Marquis de Ferrière le Vayer, who was entirely opposed to the annexation of Tuscany to Sardinia, whereas the Prince was, on the contrary, warmly favorable to that plan. It is perfectly well known that Prince Napoleon considerably exceeded his powers and misrepresented the Emperor's wishes and intentions in the language he held to the French Minister. Speaking in the presence

of Signor de Buoncampagni and the Marquis de Ferrière, he declared that the annexation of Tuscany to Sardinia had been decided on at headquarters and that the public mind should be prepared for that event. The Marquis pointed out grave objections to this course and immediately telegraphed to Count Walewski telling him what was going on. Instantly the Count got into telegraphic communication with the Emperor, and on May 25th, wired the French Minister as follows, this text being taken from the original in the French Foreign Office: "In answer to my questions, the Emperor replies this morning that if his cousin has made such statements as those which you report, he has acted contrary to his instructions. Please so inform the Prince. It is absolutely essential that no misunderstanding should arise in this matter, especially as the tenor of the telegrams which I have sent you during the past few days, does not at all accord with what the Prince has told you."

Prince Napoleon entered Florence on May 29th, and received an enthusiastic welcome. The streets resounded with cries of "Long live the Emperor!" "Hurrah for France!" and "Hurrah for the French army!" The prince was much cheered when he appeared at the theater. His presence in Florence had the effect of hastening revolutionary events rather than preventing them, which was just the contrary to what was wished at the Tuileries. The Sardinian party at the Tuscan capital grew bolder every day. Two of the leaders, Baron Ricasoli and the lawyer Salvagnoli, informed M. de Ferrière, at the beginning of June, that the temporal power of the Pope was to be abolished. The Empress had

felt all along that this was what was coming. The Minister wrote to the Tuileries: "I protested strongly against this sort of a plan for Italian unity which is arising in so menacing a manner in the face of Europe, and which will inevitably bring about the fall of the Pope's temporal power. I foresee that very soon a strong nation will be established on this side of the Alps, which may turn against us, and allying itself with England, may help that country to become sole mistress of the Mediterranean. It seems to me that it would be wiser for us to abandon the hope of getting Savoy, and by this disinterestedness we would then be in a position to moderate Sardinia's ambition, rather than aid in her aggrandizement, which is sure to cause such grave perturbation in our political and religious affairs. We should remember that Henry IV and Richelieu, whose names have been so frequently mentioned during the last few months, favored a policy of dismemberment of the great nations surrounding France, not a policy of bringing together the disjointed members of a scattered state so as to form a strong and united power on our very frontiers."

This was the correct view to take and it exactly coincided with Eugénie's. It was for this very reason, that she was opposed to this war from the very start. But the unitarian idea was steadily growing in Italy and it now appeared impossible to stop it. At Parma, at Modena and in the Romagna, this feeling was especially strong. The Duchess of Parma, who long hoped to save her son's throne, felt that all was lost when the Austrians evacuated Placentia, and when, on June 16, 1859, Piedmont sent a governor there, she left a few days later for Switzer-

land, where she died five years afterwards, much mourned by all. About the same time, another agent of the Piedmontese government took possession of Modena, whence the duke had withdrawn into the fortress of Brescello. The Austrians had left the Romagna on June 12th, when there was immediately summoned at Bologna a junta, one of the most influential members of which was the Marquis Joachim Pepoli, a grandson of King Murat, who had married a Hohenzollern princess. This junta proclaimed Victor Emmanuel dictator and that sovereign consequently sent a special agent to the region.

All these facts reached the Empress in Paris some time before they reached the Emperor in Italy, and she always made haste to send him her impressions of the event, as well as the impressions of the public and those about her, feeling that such information might be useful to him in making up his own mind as to what should be done under the circumstances. Of course the Empress did not favor the acts just recorded, and in this she followed the example set by Cardinal Antonelli, the Pope's Minister of Foreign Affairs, who energetically protested against, "a crime which horrifies every one"—"the triumph of Prince Napoleon's views." Eugénie wrote to the Emperor, who still held to his federation program. "But will you be able to check the unity movement?" she asked, "which seems destined to prevail, if we may judge by the attitude adopted by the Piedmontese government in the different principalities and in the Romagna." Soon the whole of central Italy was evacuated by the Austrians, and Prince Napoleon, "the mar-plot," as he was then dubbed in

the immediate court circle, was ordered to rejoin the army, commanded by the Emperor.

There was already some talk of peace, and Prince Napoleon, the Empress learned, was not one of the last to support this move, though he had at first been so desirous for the war. "Here, some danger in the direction of Prussia is felt to be pending," she wrote to the Emperor at this moment. "Irritated by our rapid victories, that power, I understand, is beginning to raise her voice of disapproval. The Germans, we are told here, regard the Mincio as a line of defense necessary for the protection of their country. That line has now been broken, and so German public opinion demands that Austria be aided. The persons whom I am quoting say Prussia has stood on the reserve until the present, but her attitude is henceforth to be more decided. In the meanwhile, she has seized the occasion of the embarrassment of Austria to strengthen her own position in the Empire and has already partially succeeded in this design, I am assured, though I am not informed in just what respect. Now she expects, as he has been beaten, that the Emperor Francis Joseph will be ready to secure her aid by making further sacrifices. A diplomat here tells me that 'on June 25th, Prussia demanded at the Diet, that all the federal troops be mobilized and announced her intention of an armed mediation in Italy. But this mobilization of the troops would not alone satisfy Prussia; even more important was the question as to who was to command these troops. This Prussia claimed. Austria protested, and pointed out that if this request were granted, the armed forces of the whole confederation would be at the beck and call of Berlin.

Then ensued a number of diplomatic interviews, communications and much traveling of ambassadors and special envoys. But Prussia stood firm; either the Prince Regent must be allowed to accept the command of the federal troops, which the Diet had offered him, and which would be subject to the control of the Diet, or Prussia must break with the confederacy.' Such, I am told, is the burning question that is being warmly discussed on the banks of the Spree and the Main, and 'from which might spring a war on the Main when the knot is cut on the Mincio.' "

Further on in her communication, the Empress said: "It is believed here that undoubtedly England is preparing to take advantage of current events. Her fleet is said to be near Alexandria, where she is trying to influence the mind of the Pacha of Egypt. She is also ready to offer her mediation for a cessation of hostilities. Russia, though favorably disposed towards us, as you know, does not hide her desire, if I am well informed, to see an end put to this war, which she fears may take a revolutionary turn. You have already received, or will receive, I am told, an autograph letter from the Czar touching on this matter. 'For all these reasons,' the same diplomat, whom I have before quoted, says to me, 'the state of Europe is very unsettled at this moment. In Germany, especially, the excitement is very intense. The old feeling of 1813 is rekindled, and no pacific assurances on your part will satisy Prussia. The Prince Regent of Prussia has not hesitated to say that the Emperor is deceiving every one and that it is the bounden duty of all Prussians and of all Germans,

for that matter, to get ready to face the danger.'

"Since I began writing, pessimistic notes have reached us concerning the state of public opinion in England. Count Walewski has communicated to me the contents of these notes, and I assure you I am alarmed, in spite of our grand victories on the battle field. Of course, you know that Lord Derby's Tory ministry fell on June 10th, and has been replaced by a Whig cabinet, with Lord Palmerston as Prime Minister and Lord John Russell at the Foreign Office. The Italians will doubtless imagine that, thanks to these two veteran champions of their cause, the unity idea will find support in England. I am told that the more sanguine even go so far as to give out that the English fleet is going to help Italy to free Venice! I learn here that the Marquis d'Azeglio, Victor Emmanuel's agent in the Romagna, if I am not mistaken, is delighted with the turn events have taken in London, and has even made haste to explain to Lord Palmerston his project of an Italian kingdom which should include Lombardy, Venetia, the Romagna and the duchies. I am informed that Lord Palmerston remarked when he heard this extravagant plan: 'Well, the question is whether France wishes to set up on her south-eastern frontier a second Prussia!' And this was well said, according to my way of thinking."

Comte de Persigny, on the other hand, suggested to Lord Palmerston a plan which he thought might arrange matters. He would give to Piedmont, Lombardy, and then satisfy Austria by creating for one of her grand dukes a separate kingdom made up of Venetia and Modena. But the British Premier did not approve this proposed arrangement. In the

meantime, the Emperor, informed of the state of public opinion in Paris, Germany and elsewhere, was becoming very anxious concerning the future. At this moment, he wrote as follows to the Empress: "The sight of numerous wounded soldiers whom it is impossible to properly succor, the large number of deaths in the ranks, the loss of several generals and a host of valiant officers, the arrival here at the front of wives and daughters seeking news of fallen relatives, the overpowering heat which has caused much illness and threatens us with a typhus epidemic,—all these and many other reasons counsel us to turn a deaf ear to the demands of the king of Sardinia and the war party."

In the meantime, Lord Palmerston had politely but firmly declined the offer of mediation proposed by the French government, and wrote to Comte de Persigny, so the Empress was informed: "If the Emperor finds that the war has lasted long enough and thinks the task too hard of continuing it, he should make his own personal and formal offers to the Emperor of Austria and not count on our representing his demands under our authority." But Lord Palmerston probably little imagined that Napoleon would immediately act on his advice; for when the Emperor saw that nothing was to be expected from England, he quickly made up his mind to act alone and promptly, and without revealing his intentions to anybody. While seeking the most rapid means of bringing about a peace, he successfully hid his purpose by increased activity in warlike preparations. Every day reënforcements were added to the French army encamped on the Mincio. Besides Prince Napoleon's corps which, as was

stated above, had just joined the main body, a new division was almost daily expected from France. The allied army was convinced that it was going to march against the formidable quadrilateral, formed by the four towns of Peschiera, Mantua, Verona, and Legnago, which constituted a first rate strategical position. The seige of Peschiera had been already commenced.

From letters which the Empress and others received at Paris from the Emperor, it was seen that he spent his days and sometimes his nights also in visiting the most advanced posts and in inspecting the artillery and engineering works on the Mincio. A private letter which the Empress received from a friend at the front, referred as follows to the Emperor: "We see his Majesty every day moving about calmly, always in a perfectly good temper, kind towards the generals in chief, and unceasingly solicitous for the welfare of the lower officers and the common soldiers. He is especially anxious concerning the sanitary condition of the army, particularly as at the beginning of July we had some 2,500 cases of illness in the hospitals or ambulances. A great number of Austrian prisoners have been carried to Genoa, and the good Emperor has given orders that they be treated with the greatest kindness. By his instructions, even money has been advanced to the needy officers. When the Emperor of Austria requested that the body of Prince Windischgraetz be placed in the possession of an envoy sent for that purpose, the latter was very well received and Napoleon charged him to thank Francis Joseph for his kind treatment of the French prisoners."

Everything seemed to point to the fact that the

Emperor, notwithstanding the humanitarian sentiments which were weighing on his heart, would not lay down his arms until he had entirely carried out the program for which the war was begun, that is to say, not until Italy was free from the Alps to the Adriatic. Nor was it the army alone which appeared on the point of executing this plan. The navy too was getting ready to participate in current events. A fleet was sent to the Adriatic and preparations were underway to blockade Venice. A neighboring island was already occupied by one of our squadrons. Troops under Cialdini and Garibaldi were to scour the mountains, while we supported them simultaneously on land and on sea. Venice was to be taken, and the Austrian army to be driven back in retreat, while, on the opposite side, we were to lay siege to Verona. Thus, everything apparently was leading up to a general and decisive action. The Emperor's marching orders, dated on July 6th, from Valeggio, gave the most minute details concerning the seige of Peschiera. "A great battle is imminent," wrote a trusted friend at the front. But at this very moment the Emperor suddenly changed his mind and his plan of action. This friend wrote: "On July 6th, in spite of the intolerable heat, the Emperor, accompanied by his aide-de-camp, General Fleury, visited and inspected the heights of Somma Compagna. Barely had they returned to Valeggio, when the Major General Marshal Vaillant sent for General Fleury and informed him that the Emperor was about to intrust him with a very delicate mission. The General went to the Emperor's quarters and found his Majesty closeted with King Victor Emanuel. Napoleon handed a mis-

sive to General Fleury, saying: 'Here is a letter you are to take to the Emperor of Austria. I am making an appeal to his humanitarian feelings, and proposing a suspension of hostilities in order to give time for diplomatic negotiations looking to a peace. I need a pleasing and intelligent ambassador, and this is why, General, I have chosen you for this intricate task.' "

General Fleury had a taste for diplomacy, and was full of tact, "which is the soul of diplomacy," the Emperor once remarked. His private letters, which his widow once showed, all prove that he very closely understood the difficulties which Europe would experience if the war were continued at that time, and that he guessed the Emperor was anxious to bring hostilities to an end, and as quickly as possible. So, accompanied by Captain de Verdières, his aide-de-camp, a courier and a trumpeter, who was seated high up on the back seat of the carriage with a white flag in his hand,—General Fleury started out at seven in the morning and was soon at Verona. This carriage, with the French Emperor's arms on the doors, caused considerable comment as it rolled through the streets of the old town. The General was cordially received at the palace where the Emperor Francis Joseph was installed. The latter was in bed, but informed his early visitor that he was getting up, and he soon appeared. The chivalrous letter in which the Emperor Napoleon proposed an armistice to his young adversary was of a nature to please the latter. The Emperor Francis Joseph informed General Fleury that he could not give his answer till the next morning. The General politely pointed out the fact that the French fleet and

army were on the point of attacking Venice, and then retired "well satisfied by the manner of the Emperor," the General says in one of his letters, "that my mission would not be in vain." In fact, early next morning, Prince Richard Metternich called on General Fleury to inform him that the Emperor would receive him at eight the same morning, when Napoleon's envoy was told that the proposed armistice was accepted and that the French Emperor had been requested to name a place where the conditions of peace could be discussed. The Emperor asked General Fleury to have the French fleet immediately advised of the truce, which was forthwith done. Thereupon, General Fleury returned to Valeggio, where his arrival was eagerly awaited. He related: "When I said, 'I bring good news,' and put my hand in my pocket to bring out Francis Joseph's reply, I perceived a look of great relief spread over Napoleon III's face."

The interview between the delegates of the two sovereigns took place two days later at Villafranca, half way between Verona and Valeggio. A suspension of arms was immediately decided upon, which meant, in the view of some, simply a truce, and according to others, a permanent peace. The Empress of course was in the latter category, though she knew that this peace would find many critics both at home and abroad; and she wrote in this sense to the Emperor. The latter replied: "I am not surprised at the surprise in France, nor at the disappointment in Piedmont. In fact, I would be surprised if it were otherwise. Count Cavour is furious, and my good friend Victor Emmanuel sees what is surely coming. But as Austria may not

agree to the conditions which we have laid down, nothing is positively decided yet." On July 10th, the sovereigns were to meet, and on that same day, before the interview, General Fleury wrote: "I think the young Emperor of Austria by consenting to the interview, must also be prepared to accept the conditions which form the basis of the future negotiations. This means peace within a very short time. This is great news. It is the triumph of a policy of moderation. The Emperor seems delighted, as does everybody else, also."

General Fleury gives the following largely inedited account of the meeting of the two sovereigns: "The interview took place at Villafranca at nine in the morning. Napoleon III was the first to arrive; but instead of waiting at the chosen spot rode on toward Verona, in order to show courtesy to Francis Joseph. A half mile further on, he saw the Emperor of Austria galloping forward to meet him, and they were soon face to face. Then the sovereigns pulled in their horses, saluted in military fashion and finally shook hands. Napoleon III rode on the left of Francis Joseph. Accompanied by their military staffs, they returned slowly towards Villafranca. They alighted at the house of Signor Gaudin-Morelli, in the principal street of the town, and quickly went upstairs to the first floor, where they remained quite alone for some time, engaged in earnest conversation. We downstairs, were, in the meantime, asking ourselves the question, whether this meeting meant peace, or whether it meant a continuation of the war, which might lead to a general conflagration of Europe. But it was soon learned that in this exchange of views between the sovereign of fifty and

the sovereign of twenty-nine, the conqueror showed the most kindly spirit. I know our Emperor was much moved by the youth, misfortunes and dignified manners of his young interlocutor and wished to make the situation as easy for him as possible, fully realizing how heavily weighed the crown on his brow at that time. Francis Joseph, on his side, we learned, deeply admired the moderate language and the chivalrous attitude of the Emperor. 'He was much affected by the gentle tones of Napoleon's voice,' said one of the Austrian officers to me and 'by the kindness and affability visible in his features.' Said another officer: 'The sovereigns exchanged views, no iron-bound conditions were imposed. The French Emperor simply expressed certain wishes.' Among these wishes was the cession of Lombardy to Sardinia, the creation of a kingdom of Venetia under the rule of an Austrian Grand Duke, the establishment of an Italian Confederation under the presidency of the Pope, a series of reforms in the States of the Church, and, finally, a congress which should settle the details of all these matters. 'I wish for peace,' answered Francis Joseph, 'and I will give your Majesty a proof of my confidence in you, by stating right here at the start, the length to which I can go in the way of concessions. I have lost Lombardy, but I can not bring myself to hand it over personally to Sardinia. What I propose is to cede it to France and your Majesty can do with it what you think best. As for Venetia, still occupied by my troops, I can not think of abandoning that which has not been conquered. I am not ignorant of the fact that great reforms are needed in that country. I will do my best to bring them about, and

unless I am greatly mistaken, Venetia will have nothing to complain of in the very near future.' Napoleon did not push further the cession of Venetia, though he did press the idea of Venetia being included in his proposed Italian Confederation, which was to be under the protection of Austria, with the Pope acting as President, but whose general features were left vague and undefined. 'I agree with your Majesty,' Francis Joseph continued, 'in the matter of the crying need of reforms in the States of the Church, and I am ready to join forces with France in demanding such reforms, though I think we should go slowly in the matter and find some practical means of carrying out our program before proclaiming it publicly.' ''

Speaking of this meeting several years afterwards, Napoleon III said to the Empress: ''There was one point on which the Austrian Emperor laid much stress and which gave rise, later on, to great difficulties. I refer to his ardent desire that the Grand Duke of Tuscany and the Duke of Modena, who shared with him his evil fortune, be restored to their thrones. They were both Austrian Arch-Dukes, which made it still more difficult for him to desert them. I felt keenly this desire of the Emperor to stand by his allies, but as I could not then tell what fate was reserved for those unfortunate states, I could not, naturally, promise the Emperor anything positive. I did tell him, however, that I would do everything in my power to restore them to their states, provided they granted their people a constitution and offered a general amnesty. I further assured him that I would follow a like course in favor of the Duchy of Parma, and I informed him

that you were also eager to help in this instance. I could see that all this greatly pleased the young Emperor. But later events proved that it was impossible to maintain the autonomy of these duchies, though it was rather the acts of the populations of those states than any aggression of Sardinia that put an end to Austrian rule there. But the question then in Francis Joseph's mind was to know whether my intentions in this matter of the duchies was simply platonic or whether I would have recourse to arms to carry out my personal desires. Of course I had no intention of going to extremes."

General Fleury continues his narration of the interview, as follows: "Only the first steps had been taken. Nothing between the two sovereigns had been put in writing, and each counted on the word of the other. But the conversation had come to an end, and now the two staffs were introduced to one another. Our Emperor was especially nice to old Field Marshal von Hess, who was born in 1788. 'I am proud,' his Majesty said, 'to have been able to fight against one of the glorious soldiers of Wagram.' Though the Emperor referred to an event which occurred half a century ago, it is wonderful how young in appearance this aged veteran is. Napoleon then reviewed some of the crack soldiers of the Austrian army and Francis Joseph did the same thing in respect to our army. The Austrian Emperor was especially complimentary to the squadron of Guides, who, as you know, have, along with the Cent Gardes, the finest uniforms in our army. I was particularly pleased with what his Majesty said of the Guides, for you have not forgotten how I drilled those troops. It was my old regiment. After this

Francis Joseph returned the courtesy of Napoleon in the morning, and accompanied him a certain distance from Villafranca on the road back to Valeggio. They then parted in a most friendly manner, and thus, after a bloody war which has already made too many victims, peace was to come, thanks to the Emperor's wisdom and moderation."

King Victor Emmanuel, was surprised and deeply disappointed at the unexpected turn events had taken. At first, he tried not to let the Emperor see how vexed he was, and spoke only of his gratitude for all that had been done for Italy. But I learned that later he gave way to fits of anger when alone with Cavour. Only half of his hopes were realized. He now saw that he could no longer count on France to aid him in the accomplishment of the remaining half. He perceived that peace would be concluded before he had obtained all the conquests that he had in mind. But later events showed that through carefully worked up popular votes, he secured much that he had expected to win only on the field of battle.

The Emperor continued: "During our interview, nothing was written between Francis Joseph and myself. But on reaching Valeggio, I quickly wrote down our conversation as I remembered it and requested Prince Napoleon to carry the summary to Verona and obtain the signature of Francis Joseph. Though my choice of envoy was criticized in some quarters at the time, the selection was the right one. My own cousin and the son-in-law of Victor Emmanuel—the king of Sardinia could rely on him to do his utmost in favor of Italy. I knew that as he was dealing with a foreign sovereign, Prince Napoleon would maintain an attitude and assume a language

that were to be expected from him under these circumstances. And the fashion in which he fulfilled his missions proved that I was not mistaken in my opinion of him. I have also been blamed for being influenced at this moment by what was happening in Germany. 'There was no danger from Prussia,' these critics said. But we know now that there was much danger in that quarter. Von Moltke has said that 'Prussia was up in arms and that the mobilization of two thirds of her military forces was completed, and the remaining third was ready to hasten to the front. Troops were already marching towards the first gathering place. It was no secret, that on July 15, 1869, the transport by rail of soldiers, towards the Rhine, was to commence, and that in a very short time there would have been an army of 25,000 men assembled there, while the contingents from all the other German states stood ready to join them if called upon to do so.'

"So Prince Napoleon set off at half past two that same day in a carriage drawn by four horses, I remember, and two hours later he was at the Austrian headquarters, where Francis Joseph received him most affably and conducted him immediately to the private study. The details of that interview were given me by the Prince at the time. They may be summarized about as follows: The Emperor of Austria began with these words: 'I was very frank with the Emperor this morning when I told him what were the limits of my concessions, and what was compatible with my honor and the interests of my realm. You must not forget that if you have to take into account public opinion, I have to do the same thing, and this public opinion will be more exacting

in my case, as it is I who must make all the sacrifices in this instance.' The Prince and the Emperor then took up the document which I had penned, examining it paragraph by paragraph. The first paragraph contained the statement that 'the two sovereigns will favor the formation of an Italian Confederation.' This raised no objection. The organization of this confederation was to be regulated by a congress and put under 'the honorary presidency of the Pope.' This was the second paragraph and the word 'honorary' was taken exception to at first by the Emperor, but was finally agreed to. The third paragraph dealt with the cession of Lombardy to me, who 'in accordance with the expressed wishes of the people of that state will hand it over to the king of Sardinia.' Francis Joseph took exception to the words 'in accordance with the expressed wishes, etc.' and stated his objections in these words: 'I can recognize only the law as laid down in our treaties, according to which I am the owner of Lombardy. As I have been defeated in arms, I agree to yield that province to Napoleon III, but I cannot in a document which I am expected to sign have any cognizance of a law or right emanating from a so-called "people"; that smacks too much of the Revolution. You may use these words in dealing with the king of Sardinia, if you will, but you will readily understand that I, the Emperor of Austria, cannot accept such language. Napoleon will grasp my meaning fully.' The Prince bowed, admitted that the Emperor's objection was perfectly justified under the circumstances, and the words to which he took exception were erased.

"There was, next, some discussion concerning the

question of Peschiera and Mantua. 'I cannot order my army to leave these strongholds which it has kept and is still in possession of,' said the Emperor: 'honor makes this impossible. If the allied armies had taken Peschiera, I should understand Napoleon asking to keep that place; but my troops are still there. Please say to the Emperor that even if, personally, I were willing to do what he asks, as the head of this monarchy such a course would be impossible. I can not give up any of these fortresses.'

"The paragraph concerning Venetia 'which was to be part of the proposed Italian confederation while remaining under the crown of Austria' was adopted without any objection. But not so the fifth paragraph which was very important and read as follows: 'The two sovereigns will make every effort, except that of having recourse to arms, to maintain in their states the Grand Duke of Tuscany and the Duke of Modena, if they grant amnesty and a constitution.' The Emperor objected to the phrase 'except that of having recourse to arms,' which he looked upon as an encouragement to revolutionary measures. 'I can make personal sacrifices, but I can not and will not forsake my relatives and faithful allies.' I fancied at the time that the Duke of Modena, with the help of a few battalions, would be able to get back into power and I was informed that the Grand Duke of Tuscany was on the point of settling matters amicably with his subjects. So it seemed that this question could be put aside for the moment. As for the Duchy of Parma, which Prince Napoleon would have liked to see annexed to Sardinia, the Emperor of Austria said: 'Do not let us take this subject up in these preliminary negotia-

tions, especially as the Duchess-Regent is not a member of my family and I can not give up states which do not belong to me.'

"Paragraph six provided that the sovereigns should ask the Holy Father to bring about needed reforms in his states, and the congress was to decide whether the administration of the legations should not be quite separated from spiritual concerns. And finally it was decided that full and complete amnesty was to be granted, on both sides, to all persons compromised by the events which had just taken place in the belligerent states.

"The interview had lasted two hours, and an agreement had been reached on all essential points. At the end, Prince Napoleon informed Francis Joseph that he had promised me to be back at Valeggio before ten that same evening. The Emperor replied that he would have the written document drawn up forthwith, and he then conducted the Prince to a hall where dinner was waiting, leaving him alone. At half past seven, the Emperor met the Prince again, bringing with him the written document as arranged by him. It contained the slight modifications settled upon at the interview. Prince Napoleon felt that it was useless to try and get the Emperor to change on these points, so he then and there requested him to sign his own document just as it stood. But the latter at first objected: 'Let me know first,' he said, 'whether the Emperor Napoleon agrees to the changes which I have made in his original document as you presented it to me.' The Prince replied: 'If your Majesty will sign now —which will save much time, perhaps—I will see that the document is returned to you to-morrow

morning, whether it is signed or not by Napoleon III.' Thereupon, Francis Joseph took up his pen and as he signed the document, he remarked: 'I am making a great sacrifice in thus ceding one of my finest provinces. But if we can agree, the Emperor and myself, as to Italian affairs in general, there will no longer be ground for differences between France and Austria.' The Emperor continued to chat with Prince Napoleon for a few minutes, led him to the top of the stairs, and shaking hands with him, said: 'Good-by, Prince; I trust there will never again be any enmity between us.' ''

Among certain papers is this sheet in the handwriting of Prince Napoleon, which gives the final chapter of these important negotiations in which he played such a large part:

''At ten the same evening, I was back at Valeggio. The Emperor did not try to hide his joy when he had read the preliminaries signed by Francis Joseph. He cordially embraced me, when he had laid the paper down. The next morning, he himself signed it and then had it borne to Francis Joseph, accompanied by a letter in his own hand. Thus ended these peace preliminaries. Though they did not of course meet all the wishes and hopes of Sardinia, and some clouds were sure to arise from the questions which were left undecided, yet, I think, it must be agreed that it was wise to conclude peace at that moment in view of the threatening attitude of central Europe. France came out of the struggle greater, at least for a time. The annexation of Nice and Savoy was then accepted in principle, as a return for all that had been done by France for Italy in her long struggle for unity.''

CHAPTER III

THE SECOND EMPIRE AND ITALIAN UNITY

The cause of Italian unity played an important part in the foreign policy of the Second Empire. At times, it even had much influence on the home affairs of France. It deeply interested both the Emperor and the Empress. The latter regarded rather its religious side, in so far as it concerned the Pope and the old States of the Church. The Emperor cared more for the political aspect of the question, with all its many ramifications. But the first consequence of the Italian war, with all its troubles, little and big, rather wearied the Emperor. "Oh! this complicated Italian business," he used to say at this time; "I have wished more than once that I had never gone so far into it." In the following pages some of these consequences are touched upon briefly by the aid of notes and conversations, and impressions of various kinds received at the time and strengthened and made more distinct by reading, personal interviews with distinguished Italians and several journeys into that delightful land of historical charm and natural beauty.

The war had ended victoriously; all parties at home seemed to join in the triumph of our armies, and to lay aside for a time their private spites and demands. But the political side of the Italian question was still full of difficulties; the internal situa-

tion of Italy remained confused and obscure. It was not sure whether all the clauses of the treaty of Villafranca would be carried out, and it was feared that there might be trouble over some of them. What will be the fate of the young "Italian Confederation?" Will the Italian sovereigns be reëstablished in their domains? Will the Pope still possess the States of the Church? Will the partisans of "Italian Unity" now be contented with what has been accomplished or will they demand more? Will a congress be called to settle all these questions? Such were some of the principal problems that crowded upon the attention of the anxious Emperor.

In private conversations, later, the Emperor took up many of these points and clearly expressed his views on them. One day in England, he spoke as follows about the treaty of Villafranca: "I gave my word to the Emperor Francis Joseph to keep my promises. Because I resisted the efforts of the Piedmontese and the partisans of Italian unity to force my hand; or rather, because I was dissatisfied that they should altogether ignore me in failing to execute some of the clauses of the treaty, people have seen fit to say that I was playing a double part, that I was seeking to promote French interests at the expense of Italian interests. There is not the slightest shadow of truth in these assertions. What is true is that, alongside of the arrangements entered into with the Austrian sovereign, we had to deal with the population of small states which could not be coerced and whose rights to choose their own rulers had to be respected. The 'rights of peoples' was a new idea and could not be disregarded. I was not averse to the reëstablishing of the dethroned Italian

princes, if it could be done without violating the rights of peoples doctrine. The dream of Italian unity did not so much appeal to me, and I was especially desirous to see maintained Tuscan Autonomy.

"At first, King Victor Emmanuel pretended to carry out scrupulously all the clauses of the treaty of Villafranca. In Florence, there was some agitation between the partisans of the return to power of Grand Duke Leopold and the partisans of Victor Emmanuel. All our sympathies were on the side of the Grand Duke and in favor of Tuscan autonomy. But we recognized the difficulties in the way of the realization of this plan, especially when our minister at Florence wrote me: 'The revolutionary string is too tightly strung and national sentiment too deeply wounded.' In his opinion, a restoration was possible only with the aid of French troops, which was of course out of the question. In the same letter occurred this passage: 'the Grand Duke presumptive might have had some chance of success if Prince Napoleon had not stayed in Florence, if Tuscany had not been abandoned for two months and handed over to the intimidating methods of the clubs and to the pressure brought to bear by a government bent on annexation, and if the princes had not been in the enemy's camp. The Tuscan people will not now hear of the father or the son, and would prefer anything rather than a return of the former royal family.' Though there remained a certain number of partisans of Tuscan self-government, they were overpowered by the great popular lord, Baron Ricasoli, whose biting and ardent eloquence made a powerful impression on the public. He bold-

ly issued a call to arms 'against those defeated at Solferino.'

"We did all that persuasion could accomplish. We sent two special missions to Florence. I let it be known there that I would personally be pleased to see the Grand Duke or his son restored to power. Nothing availed. An assembly called together by Baron Ricasoli's government, voted almost unanimously to annex Tuscany to Piedmont. Would the king of Italy—rather, the future king of Italy—accept the gift? How should I act in the matter? What would be the opinion of the great powers? Such were some of the questions that puzzled me and my advisers at this moment. Our minister at Turin informed us that Victor Emmanuel's first impulse was to decline the offer made by the Tuscan assembly, but that his decision was modified by the pressure of his immediate circle. The closing words of the king's speech to the Tuscan delegation whose correct text was sent us by the minister, pleased me very much. It ran as follows: 'The full realization of my desires can be accomplished only after negotiations concerning Italian affairs. Strengthened by the powers which your decision confers upon me, I will support your cause in dealing with foreign governments, and especially with the magnanimous Emperor of the French who has done so much for this Italian nation. I trust that Europe will not refuse to do for Tuscany, what she has done for Greece, Belgium and the Principalities, whose claims were not all so well founded as your own.' And here practically ended our efforts to keep Tuscany an independent nation."

The Emperor and the Empress were specially in-

terested in the Duchy of Parma, whose sovereign was only eleven years old. His mother, the regent Louise of France, daughter of the Duc and Duchess de Berry, sister of the Comte de Chambrod, and widow of Charles III, who was murdered on March 27, 1854, had governed since that date. She was an amiable and attractive princess, with very liberal ideas, which appeared all the broader when held by a Bourbon and the sister of the Legitimist pretender to the throne of France. "Besides our real sympathy for this excellent woman on her own account," the Emperor once said, "it was also good policy to do what we could to protect the rights of one so closely linked with the Legitimist party in France. Then again, the views of the Duchess as to the best way to solve the Italian problem much resembled those advocated by me and the French government; that is to say, she wished to see organized in the peninsula a confederation which should be free from all foreign influences." But all these hopes were blasted. The duchy early became a part of the future kingdom of Italy.

The Emperor could not entertain a similar feeling of friendship for the Duke of Modena, whose family was very uncompromising, reactionary and opposed to all Napoleonic and liberal ideas. Duke Francis IV had suppressed the Napoleonic code in his states, had never recognized the government of Louis Philippe and had openly expressed a profound dislike for the tricolor flag. Duke Francis V had continued in the mistaken path of his father and was more of an absolutist than his brother-in-law, the Comte de Chambord. His attitude towards Napoleon and Eugénie had always been cold and dis-

trustful. He even carried this spirit of spitefulness so far as to refuse to allow those of his subjects who had served under Napoleon I to wear the medal of St. Helena. The Duke was a devoted lieutenant of the Emperor of Austria and was particularly pronounced in his hatred of the partisans of Italian unity. The Piedmontese commissioner who was sent to Modena convened, in the middle of August 1859 an assembly, which decided unanimously the fall of the duke and the annexation of the duchy to Sardinia.

"But I did not share that opinion," said the Emperor, "and recommended Modenese self-government, not that I felt any sympathy for the Duke, which I did not, but because I had the idea that, if the Duchy of Parma were annexed to Piedmont, Modena might be given, in compensation, to the young sovereign. But I afterwards found that it was difficult to realize this scheme because Austria was unwilling to lay aside her strict principles in favor of a revolutionary substitution, such as I suggested. Moreover, the Duchess of Parma, sister of the Comte de Chambord, felt that she could not accept a proposal which would benefit her at the expense of the brother-in-law of the Count, and remembering the kindness which Francis IV had always shown the Dutchess de Berry, the regent found it all the more difficult for her to enter into my plan. So this, like so many other of my wishes concerning things Italian at this time, had to be abandoned."

But what troubled the Emperor and the Empress the most in all this Italian imbroglio was the so-called Romagna Question. The Romagna territory

formed the Six Legations of the Papal States. At the beginning of the war, a French regiment occupied Rome, while the Romagna was guarded by Austrian troops. The States of the Church were neutral ground, where it was understood there was to be no fighting. Because of the presence of the French troops, there was no disturbance in Rome throughout the conflict and the same would have been the case in the Romagna if the Emperor of Austria had not caused his troops to evacuate all the Legations on June 12th.

Concerning this unfortunate action, the Emperor had made this comment: "Francis Joseph was in no way obliged to withdraw from the Papal States, and by so doing he offered a free field to the revolutionary movement and forever put an end to Austrian influence, not only in the Pope's dominions, but in all central Italy. It was plain to the most careless observer at the time and of course since, that the moment the Romagna was detached from the possessions of the Church, it was certain that the Grand Duke of Tuscany and the Dukes of Modena and Parma would be driven from their states. As soon as the Austrian soldiers left Bologna, the pontifical arms were torn down and Victor Emmanuel was proclaimed dictator. Ravenna, Ferrara, Forli, Imola, and Faenza followed the example set by Bologna, and thus the Pope lost forever the Romagna. I protested against such a state of things, against deeds of violence which were quite contrary to the stipulations of the treaty of Villafranca and I demanded that the Piedmontese troops be withdrawn from Bologna. But no attention was paid to my remonstrances."

The Empress was much afflicted by this spoliation, and she strove, by every means in her power, to prevent the six towns from being taken from the government of the Church. She had long foreseen all the complications which would spring from the Italian war and was consequently heartily opposed to it from the very start. Eugénie distrusted the king of Sardinia and his counselors, and felt sure that the Pope would be one of the chief victims of the "struggle for independence."

"As a way out of all these difficulties," continues the Emperor, "I had proposed an Italian Confederation with Pope Pius IX at its head. But the Holy Father, I learned at the time, was vexed with me for having asked Francis Joseph, when the preliminaries of the treaty of Villafranca were being negotiated to join with me in bringing about the administrative separation of the Legations from the Papal States. Nor was he pleased with me for having proposed that the Pope be the 'honorary' head of the suggested confederation, especially as he was informed that Francis Joseph did not like the expression. I was afterwards told that he considered this title a piece of empty flattery, hiding dark designs, 'a mere snare,' but what these dark designs were, that the Holy Father never told us. So the Pope would have nothing to do with my proposal and any real conciliation became impossible, much to my own and the Emperor's distress."

At another time the Emperor said, speaking of this same Italian complication: "I was of course much troubled over this state of things. England, on the contrary, was delighted, for she saw that the consequences of the war would be just what she de-

sired,—the complete unification of the Italian nation. And this was the very thing that I wished to avoid. I had hoped to deliver the Peninsula from all foreign influence and control, and to fortify Piedmont, but not to hand over the whole of Italy to that power. So, with this end in view, I hastened peace between Austria and ourselves, hoping thus to check the revolutionary movement which I perceived was gaining ground rapidly; and, at the same time, I sought to hold back Piedmont. But all this was too late. The revolutionary spirit was awakened, and, as we soon saw, the unification of Italy was brought about, and, with it, much religious agitation in France.

"I had long been persuaded that Pius IX could retain control of the Romagna only on condition that he secularized the government. This was no novel idea. For some twenty years, the Legations were withdrawn from pontifical authority and enjoyed a government based on the leading principles of modern civilization. But the congress of Vienna once more brought them under ecclesiastical authority. An enlightened policy would have taken into account the situation in which they had been placed during so long a space of time, and by wise handling, would have endowed them with institutions as similar as possible to those which they had just lost. Instead of this, however, they were not given the privileges which they had enjoyed up to 1797. I remembered that Chateaubriand before 1830 and Count de Saint Aulaire after that date, both pointed out in energetic terms the dangers of such a system, which they pronounced to be fatal. The memories of my youth were always with me in after life. I

was brought up amidst liberal ideas and a respect for religion. The atmosphere which I breathed as a boy and young man was full of conflicting influences. I remember hearing Queen Hortense say in 1831: 'If the Pope were only disposed to make a few necessary concessions, he would on the morrow be the chief of all Italy. He might even dictate the law to all Europe, and restore to religion, allied with liberty the splendor and pomp of the olden days.' This remark penetrated deep into my soul and the memory of it was not effaced when I was, in 1859, brought face to face with this very problem. My abortive Italian Confederation, with the Pope at its head, was an attempt to bring into being that dream of my mother. But Pius IX was not disposed to offer his subjects liberal reforms nor to secularize a large portion of his possessions and, on the other hand, I was not inclined to demand less in 1859, than I had asked for in 1849, in my public letter to Colonel Edgar Ney,—freedom, on the one hand, for the subjects, and on the other, security for the Papal throne; secularization of the administration, the introduction of the Napoleonic code and a liberal form of government. But the Holy Father was so bent on getting the one thing—security for his throne—that he forgot all else and so lost the very thing he was trying to preserve. But this is not the first time that such blindness has been seen in rulers.

"The conduct of Victor Emmanuel at this juncture was all that could have been expected, under the circumstances. In some quarters, it was questioned whether the king would recognize this annexation which had been brought about so precipi-

tately and which might cause complications of a very serious nature. He moved very cautiously, was very reserved in what he said to the delegation which offered him these new possessions, and expressed his high respect, as 'a catholic prince,' for the head of the church. He also referred to 'the generous patriotism of the Emperor of the French who will surely aid in bringing about the great deed of reparation which he has so well commenced, a deed which will assure him of Italy's gratitude.' The king clearly saw that it would not be safe to settle such an important question alone, and that Europe should have the final word in the matter. We were both agreed on this point."

It is easy to guess what anxiety all this occasioned the Empress. She had always been openly opposed to this Italian war, as I have already said, and had predicted what the results would be "with remarkable foresightedness," one of her friends was kind enough to write her. Her sympathy for the sovereigns who were overthrown was increased when the catastrophe came, and it always remained with her as a special sorrow. The blow at the Pope wounded deeply her fervent religious sentiments, and the wound did not heal during the rest of the Second Empire. Throughout the whole reign, the Roman Question was one of the great worries of the government and caused the Emperor more vexation than almost any other public event of his rule. In fact, it long remained for France a smoldering and bewildering problem.

The enemies of the Second Empire have often criticized the Italian policy of Napoleon III. They say that, by his support of the Pope, he alienated

the good-will of New Italy and the vast majority of the Italian people and especially of the house of Savoy. This criticism is partially true. But these venomous partisans know that there were two sides to the question and they take good care never to state the other side. There is the French side, the home view of the question. France is at heart a Catholic country, and this was more the case perhaps in the middle of the last century than it is to-day. The concordat then existed. The Pope and the Emperor were reciprocally bound. If Napoleon III had wholly turned his back on the Holy Father in 1859, he would have awakened a fierce opposition at home which would have been fatal to him and the dynasty. The only apparently safe course was to keep out entirely from the Italian imbroglio. But this was more easy to say than to do. The Empress always preached in this sense, but readily recognized that it was very difficult to practise what she preached. Here again, both in France and in Italy, was an influential party which demanded the intervention of France. It is perfectly plain to-day to every impartial mind that Napoleon III had only the choice between two evils. He preferred the nobler course, and once having plunged into the Italian campaign, did his best to act fairly to both parties in Italy and to keep in mind, at the same time, the political interests and demands at home. Nobody could have wholly succeeded under such circumstances, and Napoleon, who frequently spoke with the Empress and close friends on this subject, always felt that he had done his duty and had accomplished the best that could have been expected.

Furthermore, the Emperor sorely needed rest and

tranquillity. The hearty welcome which he and his troops received in France and Paris on their return from the war did not cause him to forget the dramatic scenes through which he had so recently passed nor wholly soothe his overworked system; while the complicated problems which still remained to be solved called for bodily repose, if he was not to break down under the load. The Empress also needed, though to a less degree, a respite from the anxieties and emotions of the past few months. They resolved, therefore, to go and breathe for a while the pure mountain air of the Pyrenees before seeking their favorite summer resort on the seashore at Biarritz. Consequently, on August 17, 1859, the court left Saint Cloud for the South. On reaching Tarbes they spent the night with M. Fould, the minister of finance, with whom a long talk was had concerning the financial situation of the country resulting from the Italian war. It was always the habit of the Emperor to mingle business with pleasure, and though the Empress did her best on this occasion to keep his mind entirely free from state matters, in which effort she was warmly seconded by M. Fould, who found Napoleon looking weary, they could not wholly accomplish this end. "He would go over the whole subject, and did it with his usual talent for all state affairs," M. Fould has written, in some souvenirs of the Emperor which he prepared at a later period.

The Emperor and the Empress were much comforted by the cordial way in which the people received them, which led the Emperor to remark: "Of course these cheering crowds are always a balm to my soul, and when the ovation comes from these

southerners, I am all the more touched by it; for there is something particularly sincere in their applause. These southern masses are unquestionably nearer to nature than are we of the north."

On the 19th, after mass, they started for St. Sauveur, one of the most picturesque Pyrenean villages, where, for a few days at least, they led a delightfully quiet life, making excursions to Luz, Gavarnie, and other charming spots in the neighborhood, the Emperor himself driving the little carriage which they used, through the rather dangerous roads—dangerous on account of the natural conditions of this wonderful region. Everywhere in these mountain hamlets they received the most charming marks of respect and love. The change of scenery, the quiet charms of hill and sky and the open-air existence in the pure, fresh atmosphere, put new life into the whole party from the first day.

But the Emperor could not remain long a stranger to international politics, especially as he now felt quite himself again. So, while still at St. Sauveur, he received two notable visits of a somewhat disquieting character. Count Arese came to plead the cause of Italy, while Prince Metternich followed him in the interest of Austria. It was not an easy matter to satisfy both of these distinguished visitors, "even in the mountains where the exhilarating air acts on the brain like champagne," said the Emperor to the Empress, with a smile, after the departure of the two envoys. Though the conferences were long and frequent during a few days, the Emperor appeared less weary than his diplomatic interlocutors. One morning, the Empress made a remark to this effect, whereupon the Emperor offered

this explanation: "Perhaps neither of them got all that he wanted, while I gave nothing that I wanted,"—and he indulged in a knowing wink of the eye, a way that he sometimes had with those who were very near to him.

The Emperor had known Count Arese when both were young men; for both had been exiles together. When in 1836, after the Strasburg affair, Prince Louis was transported to America, Arese hastened to Liverpool, embarked there unbeknown to the Prince, and when the latter finally set foot on American soil, the first face he saw awaiting him on the quay was that of his warmly-attached friend. So the Emperor and the Count were always peculiarly united in the closest ties of an old friendship, and at the moment now under review, they were particularly drawn to one another; for since the outbreak, and especially since the sudden close, of the Italian campaign, Count Arese had kept up a steady correspondence with the Emperor concerning Italian interests. Thus, in July he wrote: "I am going to speak with you frankly as in the days of Arenenberg and New York. In the first place, quiet my anxiety concerning your state of health, for, after such great mental and bodily strains, you may well be ailing. Do tell me of the Empress, too, who has shared with you all the uncertainties of the campaign." The Count then went on to prove that Italy would not be ungrateful. "Believe me, for you know I speak just what I feel to be the truth. After recovery from the first surprise occasioned throughout all Italy by the news of such a sudden and unexpected peace, which seemed to put a period to our vast expectations, the public on this side of the Alps begins

to realize the real situation and to better appreciate what you have already done for Italy. But this does not cause us to cease to think of what you may still further do for our unfortunate nation, which has always looked upon you as one of her sincerest friends. I beg of you, sire, to take our cause in hand, and then it is sure to triumph. By doing this, you will win new glory, and fresh titles to the admiration and gratitude of Italy." When the Emperor read these rather high flown phrases, he turned to the Empress, as he laid the letter down, and said with a half wink: "This doesn't sound like Arese. Somebody else wrote this letter. He only copied it. Of course, it is not difficult to guess whose amanuensis he was. It may have been a Count and it may have been a still more exalted personage and then, again, it may have been both. I rather think 'both' is the right word!"

The Empress also had very friendly feelings for Count Arese, but thought he would admit that he had greater difficulty in convincing her of the wisdom of his proposed course than he did in convincing the Emperor. On August 26th, she wrote to him, not then knowing that he was so soon to come to St. Sauveur, as follows: "I am trying very hard indeed to become Italian. But are you not afraid that he who tries to save her, may only be acting a fool's part? The Emperor's wishes in this matter were at one time quite opposed to those of his country, and it was necessary to appeal to the people's sense of generosity and honor to get them to approve of undertaking a struggle from which France would reap only the gratitude of a sister nation. We are indeed worn out by the trials

through which we have gone, and we should feel as a fresh and severe blow any defeat of our Italian policy."

Count Arese reached St. Sauveur on August 30, 1859; his special mission was to learn the Emperor's views as to what he thought should be the reply of King Victor Emmanuel to the Tuscan delegation which had come to offer him the union of their country to the nascent Italian nation. He strove to prove to the Imperial circle that the annexations of central Italy to the house of Savoy were inevitable. He had long conversations with the Emperor on this subject, but the latter, as we have seen, was careful not to commit himself.

Scarcely had Count Arese left when Prince Metternich sent by Francis Joseph, appeared at St. Sauveur. He particularly pointed out the necessity of observing the provisions of the Villafranca treaty and added that if this were not done, "his master would give up his generous intentions concerning the cession to Italy of the province of Venice." On September 5th, the Emperor wrote to Count Arese, told him of the visit of the Prince, and then added these words for the king: "I think that if Tuscany recalled the Grand Duke, Parma and Plaisance might be united to Piedmont, the Duchess of Parma might be transferred to Modena, and the Venetians might secure an Italian administration, an Italian soldiery and a provincial legislature of their own. In this way, the Austrians would be kept on the other side of the Alps. Such advantages deserve serious consideration. For this it is that I have written to the king urging him to be very cautious in his language towards the Tuscan delegation. I hope

that, in the long run, it will be found that the peace of Villafranca will have freed Italy. This is one of my most cherished hopes. I am preparing on these lines an article for the *Moniteur,* which will, I think, explain very clearly my motives in this matter." This article appeared in the *Moniteur* of September 9, 1859. The notes on which this article was based have been somewhat changed from their original form in the final printed version. It may be interesting, therefore, to see what was the first and probably the more private view held by the Emperor on these important international affairs, which so stirred Europe during the middle of the last century.

"If the provisions of the treaty are honestly carried out," wrote the Emperor in his hasty lead-pencil original, "Austria would cease to be a power with unfriendly feelings for the Peninsula, eager to check the aspirations for national unity which have spread from Parma to Rome and from Florence to Naples. On the contrary, she would become an aiding force in this grand work; she would no longer be a center of German influence beyond the Alps and would lend her help for the unification of Italy to the very borders of the Adriatic." The Emperor then goes on to condemn the men who "thinking of small partial successes rather than the grand final success of bringing about the complete unity of the whole Italian nation," are throwing obstacles in the way of the carrying out of the treaty of Villafranca. He adds: "What could be more simple and patriotic than to say to Austria: 'You wish the Grand Dukes to be left their thrones. Good; we agree. But then, in return, we count on you to keep your

promise concerning Venice, which will become an integral part of the new Italy.' It is true that the French government has assured Italy that the Grand Dukes shall not be forced back into their former possessions by foreign bayonets; but it should be remembered that, so long as a part of the stipulations of the treaty are not carried out, the Emperor of Austria will not feel bound to execute the provision concerning Venice, and, kept in a state of anxiety concerning hostile demonstrations on the banks of the Po, will hold his forces on the left bank ready for war. Thus, instead of a policy of peace and conciliation between the two countries, there will exist one of mistrust and even hatred, which may eventuate in fresh troubles and misfortunes."

Turning to the question of a general meeting of the powers to settle various outstanding matters, the notes speak as follows of the bearing of such a reunion on Italian affairs: "Much seems to be expected of a European congress which I have very warmly approved. But I do not believe that such a gathering would be of much aid to Italian unity. A congress can demand only what is just, and would it be just to demand of a great power important concessions without offering in return compensations of an equivalent nature? I do not think so. The only way of carrying out such a measure would be through war. But Italy should bear in mind the important fact that the only power in Europe which would be willing to take up arms for the accomplishment of a mere idealistic result is France, and the general public in France feels that we have already done all that should be expected of us in this matter of Italian unity."

In the midst of these weighty political negotiations, the time came to leave St. Sauveur for Biarritz. On September 12th, the Emperor and the Empress reached the Villa Eugénie, where, during their sojourn, they received visits from several princes. Among these were the King of the Belgians and the Grand Duke of Oldenburg. Short excursions out to sea on the new yacht *Eagle* were greatly enjoyed, by both. The daily life was simple, and one of the things that the Empress enjoyed most, was the presence of old Madrid friends, who came to meet her and with whom she could speak Spanish, which always had a peculiar charm for her. But politics were not wholly banished from Biarritz any more than had been the case at St. Sauveur, especially on the part of the Emperor who was soon plunged into Italian affairs again.

While at Biarritz, the Emperor was particularly concerned about the execution of the clauses of the treaty of Villafranca which had to do with the cession to France of Nice and Savoy. On October 3rd, he wrote on this point to Count Arese. The following extracts from this correspondence are taken from the original copies kept by the Emperor. In one of these communications he said: "I wrote to-day to send you one of the many reports which I am constantly receiving from Italy, all reflecting the lack of firmness shown by the Piedmontese government in executing a portion of the treaty which especially relates to us. A people is not regenerated by means of illumination lanterns and the strewing of flowers. The rulers must show strength and justice. How are we to explain the conduct of a government which displays so much leniency when

France and her chief executive are insulted and yet, at the same time, is so severe in its treatment of the Savoy press when sentiments in favor of annexation to France are indulged in? I do wish you would call the attention of the cabinet to these matters, and, in the meanwhile, I will also write to the king thereon." A second letter quickly followed. The Emperor had received a new communication from Milan, and while giving Count Arese the substance of it, added: "I see with real regret, I repeat, the callousness of the Sardinian government. Its course is sure to bring about a coolness between us. The Cabinet should know that here, I alone am devoted to the Italian cause." On another sheet is this paragraph: "The Sardinian government cannot pretend that it has no means of stopping this anti-French campaign in Savoy. It is surely in a position to suppress articles not in line with official policy. Why doesn't it do this? I am far from pleased, to speak mildly, that, while I am keeping up here a daily fight in favor of Piedmont, I am treated in a most insulting manner on the other side of the Alps. But such is the real fact, I am sorry to say."

The Empress, who fully realized both the present and the future difficulties of the situation, was very uneasy over the evident double-dealing of the Italian government, the increasing restlessness of Rome especially troubling her. She learned from private sources that the Holy Father would hear nothing about an Italian Confederation of any kind whatsoever, so long as he had not recovered the Romagna. There was a threatened clash on this point between the Church and France at the moment when

the court left Biarritz, on October 10th, to return to Paris. The day was spent in Bordeaux, where the Emperor and the very intelligent Cardinal, Monseigneur Donnet, had an important private conversation, the gist of which was given an official and public form in the speeches which the Cardinal and the Emperor exchanged at the reception held at the city hall. Referring to the enthusiastic greeting which had been given there to the Prince-President eight years before, the arch-bishop said to the Emperor in a private conversation, a note of which was jotted down that same evening: "The rafters of our old basilica shook from the cheers of the crowd, and myself and my priests prayed then for the prosperity of him who had stayed the ever-rising flood of revolutions, who had surrounded the brow of the church and sacerdotal authority with that halo of honor which others had sought to tear from them, and who had especially inaugurated his reign by giving back to the Vicar of Christ his city, his people and his states. To-day, sire, we pray still more earnestly, if this is possible, that God may give you the means as he has given you the will, to remain faithful to the Christian policy which has made your name blessed in all Catholic circles, and which is certainly the secret of the prosperity and the glory of your brilliant reign. The deplorable political events now unrolling themselves in Italy have not discouraged the hopes of the clergy. We do trust that you will put an end to the anxieties of the Catholic world."

Between the cardinal and the Emperor was a bond of real affection, and Napoleon was much touched by this appeal from his old friend. Among

other things, he said to him: "I am certain that a new era of glory will commence for the church on the day when everybody will share my opinion that the temporal power of the Holy Father is not incompatible with the independence of Italy. The Holy Father is naturally anxious over the day, which cannot be far off, when Rome will be evacuated by our troops; for of course it is not possible for the occupation which has now lasted ten years, to continue indefinitely. And when our army withdraws, what will it leave behind? Will it be anarchy, a reign of terror, or a condition of peace? These are questions whose importance cannot be magnified and which cause both myself and the Empress much uneasiness of mind. I think it is the duty of all of us, both here and in Italy—the king as well as the Pope—to try and solve this complex problem by both parties coming halfway. Instead of stirring up the passions of men, which, I am sorry to say seems to be the course pursued in some quarters, it is the opinion of both of us that calm wisdom should reign in the efforts to bring about the much-desired peaceful solution of the difficulty."

Immediately after his return to St. Cloud, the Emperor gave an audience, on October 16th, to a large delegation of representative Italians, who had come to discuss with him the whole Italian question, and thus ended this Imperial outing, which was characteristic of the Emperor's so-called vacations of this period. It closed as it had begun, with political business obtruding at every step on recreation. In fact, to those who were not of the immediate circle, it is difficult to form an idea of the hard-worked ruler that was Napoleon III. Thus, during

this short absence from the capital—less than two months—the Emperor, and the Empress to a less degree, were continually worried over this Italian imbroglio. Nor do I speak of the many other state matters which demanded his consideration. And this Italian matter was not disposed of on reaching St. Cloud.

From St. Cloud, the Court went, in the autumn of 1859, to Compiègne, and the Italian question went with them. On November 10th, the final treaty was signed between France, Austria and Sardinia. Although this whole matter has already been dwelt upon at some length in the foregoing pages, still another set of notes shows that the Emperor again took it up in his private conversation at Compiègne. While the general treatment is much the same, yet some new side lights are thrown on this still rather obscure episode in the European politics of the last century. This is especially the case as regards the papal side of the question. Thus, we learn that the three powers just named "would support, by every possible means, the creation of a confederacy among the Italian states under the honorary presidency of the Pope, the aim of this confederacy to be to maintain the independence and the inviolability of the confederated states, to ensure the development of their interests, both moral and material, and to guarantee the internal and the external safety of Italy by means of a federal army. The province of Venice was to remain under the tutelage of the Emperor of Austria and to form one of the states of the confederation. She was thus to share the rights and duties of the others. Special reserves were made concerning the rights of the Grand Duke

of Tuscany, the Duke of Modena and the Duke of Parma, until such time as the powers, which had helped to form those states and which had formally recognized their existence, had had an opportunity to carefully examine into the whole matter." It was a truce—"a peace, but not *the* peace," as Baron de Bourqueney, the representative of France at the conference well said to the Emperor, when the former returned to Paris.

The new Austrian ambassador, Prince Metternich, whom Napoleon had asked, after the preliminaries of Villafranca, to be sent to Paris, was destined to become, as was also the Princess, his wife, *persona grata* with the Emperor and the Empress. The court of the Tuileries soon won the friendship of this remarkable couple, but the greatest care had to be taken not to offend, by so doing, the court of Turin. This was not a very easy task, however, owing to the way in which the Turin government proceeded in this matter of carrying out the understanding arrived at at Villafranca. Thus, the Piedmontese government, taking advantage of the fact that it was allowed to act with considerable independence while the difficulties of the situation were being smoothed out, put all the states of central Italy, including the Pope's domains, under the authority of one of its own agents, Count Buoncompagni. "The only hope of the friends of the former condition of affairs," says one of the manuscript notes in the hasty handwriting of the Emperor, "was in the congress of the interested powers, which Napoleon III wished to bring about, as is revealed, for instance, in the letter of November 9th, 1859, sent to Victor Emmanuel, and in which

occurs this passage: 'It is only a congress that can get us out of all this pother. Do take hold of this with energy and make people feel that this peace treaty is not mere moonshine. Unless this is done, I much fear that Italy will be the loser from it.' " But where was this congress to meet? This was the rub. No two nations were agreed on this point, and this was probably the chief reason why the proposal finally fell through.

The notes go on, in the third person: "Napoleon III accepted a certain portion of the responsibility for the acts of the Piedmontese government. He could not, without being untrue to himself, take a part directly opposed to Victor Emmanuel and yet it did not follow that he could wholly approve of the King's course. But between this private sentiment of disapproval and an open act of dissent is a wide gap, which the Emperor did not care to fill up." The notes state how the Holy See protested loudly against the whole situation, stirring up the bishops to revolt, declaring that the legations must not be touched and announcing defiantly that no concessions whatsoever would be made. "A regular hornets' nest had been stirred up at Rome; but I fear that it will be the prelates who will get stung the worst. Anyway, I mean to give the pesky little insects a wide berth."

Another note discloses that Sardinia was decided to keep what territory she had gained; the Prussian government let it be understood that the Prince Regent's conservatism was so strong that this would prevent him from approving any of the recent changes, and that Russia was disposed to take much the same view of the international situation. "All

the princes of central Italy are for Austria, and Francis II, King of Naples and brother-in-law of the Emperor of Austria, is naturally on the side of the princes who are to be dispossessed of their lands. He hates the Piedmontese leaders and looks upon Victor Emmanuel as an accomplice of Mazzini. He is, furthermore, a friend of the Czar, Nicolas II, having been a friend of King Ferdinand, father of Francis II. So, supported by Russia and Austria, the King of Naples will certainly and naturally side with the Pope and the unfortunate princes. The attitude of England at this juncture is one of expectancy. While she is in favor of the realization of the dream of Italian unity, she would not probably aid the Piedmontese government, arms in hand, if this were expected of her. Great Britian feels that she must run no risks and make no sacrifices. The situation is, therefore, bristling with difficulties, and, though the Emperor was at first in favor of the assembling of a congress, he gradually took a different view, fearing that such a meeting might do more harm than good to the Italian cause.''

At this moment, when all these questions were absorbing public attention, the Emperor, employing a method that he often adopted, tried to find out what public opinion really wished in the matter. So he ''inspired'' a pamphlet. The manuscript of this pamphlet was preserved for some time after it was printed and a comparison of this manuscript with the printed pamphlet shows that the version finally given to the world often differed rather widely from the first and more private views of the sovereign. Some extracts from this manuscript may, consequently, well be given here.

"From a political point of view," the Emperor writes, "it is necessary that the ruler of two hundred millions of Catholics—the Sovereign pontiff—should be subject to no one, subordinate to no power, and that the august hand which governs the souls of men should be trammeled by no earthly bond but should be free to rise above all human passions and disputes. How can such independence be maintained? In these times, the Pope can not easily retain temporal and spiritual powers. How can the man of the Gospel who forgives become the man of law who punishes? How can the Chief of the Church who excommunicates heretics become the head of the State who protects liberty of conscience? In a word, how can the union of spiritual and temporal powers exist side by side, without earthly interests causing harm to heavenly interests, without the duties of the Pontiff interfering with the duties of the civil ruler? The only way to solve this problem is to restrict it. If the Pope is the ruler of a state, he will probably be a bad ruler. A successful state requires the presence of political life; there must be progress in institutions, in customs and in thought. But in a state governed by the Pope, law would be chained by dogma. The general activity of the country would be hindered and paralyzed by tradition. Patriotism would be condemned by faith. But the question would be simplified if the domain of the Pope were restricted. The matter to be determined is not whether the Pope shall have a larger or a smaller number of subjects, whether he shall have more or less territory. He must have sufficient of both so that he himself shall not be subordinated and that he be a temporal sovereign. But this sov-

ereignty must not oblige him to play a political rôle, for then the Pontiff, instead of finding in such power a guarantee of independence, would find only a condition of servitude for himself or the necessity of inflicting a sort of servitude on his people. I think, therefore, that the Pope's dominion should be restricted to Rome and a few leagues of territory about the Eternal City. A strong municipal organization should be established there; it should in a word, be a religious center deprived of all real political life. The smaller the territory, the greater the sovereign is the principle which should prevail. The Holy Father's people would then constitute a large family, grouped around him and bent only on contemplation, religious art, prayer and the worship of great traditions. It would become a government of rest and study of the past, a sort of oasis where political passions and selfish interests would not enter and which would bask only in the gentle and calm thought of the spiritual world. The Pope would still be a sovereign, but only by virtue of the homage paid him and the civil list furnished him by the Catholic faithful throughout the Christian world. As he would then be quite divorced from politics, there would no longer be any danger of a revolution in Rome disturbing his own peace and the peace of the religious world. The present rising in the Romagna offers a good opportunity for carrying out these reforms on these lines. Now temporal worries can easily be removed from the Pope's mind. There is ground for believing that the proposed congress, if it meets, would accept, with some slight modifications, perhaps, what has been done, while the Holy Father would gracefully grant

the expropriation desired by his whilom subjects, and which it would not be very difficult to prevent." Both the manuscript and the printed pamphlet, if I am not mistaken on the latter point, close with these words: "May Napoleon III have the honor of conciliating the Pope as a temporal sovereign with his people and his times,—which is the sincere wish of all Catholics, who pray God that this much-desired end may be thus attained."

Referring, towards the end of his life, to this pamphlet, the Emperor once said: "It created a great sensation, as we hoped and expected would be the case. Its proposals were indeed rather draconian, although the observing mind saw that it was animated by the spirit of one who asks for a great deal, knowing that he will get much less than he asks for. The idea of suppressing the greater part of the Pope's temporal power was advocated even though it might not have been thought realizable. Never before had such radical reforms been broached. Comte de Falloux, M. de Tocqueville, General de Lamoricière, and other well known Frenchmen, had, long before the appearance of this pamphlet, demanded the suppression of certain abuses in the pontifical administration and had urged many necessary and just reforms; but the doing away with the Holy Father's temporal powers struck most students of papal affairs as a heroic remedy. And that is just what it was meant to be. But, at the same time, I never expected that we were going to get all we wanted. I trusted that by these tactics, we would move the Pope to grant the really necessary changes in his lame government.

"Different parties in France put varied interpre-

tations on this pamphlet, as we expected would be the case. In the liberal camp, whose aims were largely met by this document, it was naturally pretty generally praised, though some of the leaders thought it was not as radical as it should have been, and very justly complained that it was wrong, to condemn to a more or less contemplative existence several hundreds of thousands of men, which would be the case if the government of the Pope were such as advocated in this pamphlet. They preferred the entire suppression of temporal power and did not care what would be the consequences of the measure from the religious point of view. In the catholic camp, the religious and political sides of the question were confused, and the result was that these partisans became very violent. Mgr. Dupanloup, Bishop of Orleans, even published an indignant refutation—or, at least, he considered it as such—of 'this inexcusable scribble' as he called it in a private conversation, which was reported to me."

The Empress of course followed all these matters with great anxiety. From the very start, as has already been said, she had been opposed to the Peninsular war because she then foresaw its consequences. The Empress felt that it was pretty sure to bring to the fore the whole religious question and that a deep abyss would be thereby created between the Imperial government and the catholic party in France, so that all the benefits which had arisen, at the beginning of the Second Empire, from the truce, would be lost. She was convinced that, as the Pope, who remained absolute sovereign of the catholic spiritual world, had not listened to the appeals of the Emperor in July, urging him, of his own

initiative, to give a separate and lay government to the Romagna, there was little likelihood that he would yield now. The Empress was morally certain that even those who, like General de Lamoricière, were on the spot and had openly condemned the government of the Monsignori, would now group themselves around the Holy Father and back him in his intention to resist all encroachments on what he considered his "inalienable rights." Eugénie like others perceived that the bishops were raising their heads, that the catholic press was beginning suddenly to change its tone, and that trouble was surely brewing; so when, in its issue of December 30, 1859, the *Roman Journal,* a Vatican organ, declared "the pamphlet to be a mere pandering to revolution, an insidious thesis with which to deceive weak minds and those who were unable to detect the hidden poison,—a cause of pain to all true Catholics"—the Empress thought fit to call the Emperor's attention to this article, which was of course inspired, as everybody well knew. Eugénie saw—and the Emperor now began to share her view—though he came around only gradually to the point where she had long stood—that the idea of calling a European congress was then out of the question. In the first place, it appeared clear to the Empress that the Pope could not be asked to send a representative to a diplomatic body whose main purpose was to register as an accomplished fact, the seizure of a large portion of his dominions. Again, with the exception of England, even the non-catholic powers blamed, either directly or indirectly, the publication of the document which had occasioned all this commotion. From Russia, especially, the

French cabinet received very unfavorable opinions. Prince Gortchakoff went so far as to tell the French ambassador, the Duke of Montebello, that "this pamphlet is troubling the peace of Europe and causing much fear."

The Emperor continues: "The matter was becoming more and more involved. One of the troubles was that among the enemies of temporal power were a large number of enemies of the church—many liberals seizing this occasion to deal a blow at spiritual power and catholicism. Of course, the clergy defended themselves vigorously under such circumstances and got much support by pointing out the tactics of their opponents. But, unfortunately, there were among them and their over-zealous friends ultras who took no account of the progress of civilization, of the claims of the people interested directly in the reforms demanded, and of the suggestions made by several sincere friends of the Pope, such, for instance, as Comte de Rayneval, who had shown up in clear and strong language, supported by unimpeachable facts, the deplorable administration, both financial and political, of the States of the Church."

In January, 1860, Pius IX had a conversation with General de Goyon, and here is the memorandum of this interview which reached the Tuileries, and which is here given as it was sent, with the Pope's remarks and the general's comments, in some cases, thereon. Here is this curious note: "The Holy Father could not find terms sufficiently strong in which to blame the pamphlet. Was he right in doing this, when it is remembered that the document had no acknowledged official character? I do

not think so. In any case, as negotiations were then underway, the matter should not have been brought up at that moment. 'May heaven enlighten the Emperor,' the Pope said to me, 'so that he may walk more surely in the difficult path which lies before him, and recognize the falseness of certain principles laid down in this document, which is a tissue of hypocrisy and a base collection of contradictions, not to use a much stronger term, that would not sound well on my lips.'"

Just before this conversation, the Emperor wrote to the Holy Father, and this letter and that of General de Goyon, may have crossed one another on the way from Paris to Rome. From the Emperor's copy of this letter, this extract is made: "One of my greatest desires, both during the late war and after its close, has been to safeguard the status of the States of the Church, and among the weighty reasons which led me to conclude peace so promptly was the fear that if the conflict continued any longer, the revolutionary tendencies would increase. But the logic of events must be looked squarely in the face, even by your Holiness. Notwithstanding the presence of my troops in Rome, I cannot divorce myself and France entirely from the national movement which has been called forth by this struggle between Italy and Austria. Your Holiness will recall that as soon as the peace was signed, I hastened to write to you, calling your attention to a plan which seemed to me then and which still seems to me the best way by which to bring about the pacification of the Romagna. I remain convinced that if your Holiness had consented to a separate government for those provinces, with a lay governor

at their head, they would have returned to your rule. I regret keenly that you did not take my view of the situation and thus prevent the spread of the revolution. And now, if the proposed congress should meet and the unquestioned rights of the Holy See over the Legations should be recognized, as would most surely be the case, it does not at all follow that the congress will feel that force should be used to obtain the submission of these rebellious subjects, for such a course would necessitate the occupation of the Legations by foreign troops for a considerable length of time; and who can tell what would be the final outcome of such a policy? That such a proceeding would keep up a situation of irritation, uneasiness and even danger can not be doubted. And this is the very thing Europe is trying to avoid. Consequently, however hard it may be for your Holiness to come to this conclusion, I think that there can be no hesitation in urging you, in the true interests of the Church, to sacrifice the revolted provinces. If the Holy Father, with a desire to give Europe a peace which she so much desires, would give them up, and then ask this same Europe to guarantee the neutrality of the remaining portion of his domains, I feel certain that he would obtain this guarantee, which would not be a poor exchange, especially as with it would come tranquillity in his part of Italy. I am also sure that your Holiness will not misunderstand the feelings which influence me to give you this friendly advice, which I trust you will accept in the spirit in which it is given, remembering all that I have done in the past for the Church and for Catholicism."

Commenting on this letter at a much later period, the Emperor said: "Up to this moment, I had tried to stand unchangeably by the preliminaries of the Villafranca treaty. But, little by little, circumstances caused me to look at the situation somewhat differently. I was now more bent than ever in an effort not to offend Piedmont, while, at the same time, striving to defend the rights of the other Italian states which Piedmont was naturally anxious to bring within its rule. So, I urged upon the Pope and King Victor Emmanuel to make concessions in order to aid me in securing a solution of the difficulty which would be acceptable to all parties. As my then minister of foreign affairs, Count Walewski, stood firmly by the first arrangements and was a warm partisan of temporal power, he retired from the foreign office and was succeeded by an able diplomat of my own way of thinking, M. Thouvemel. At about the same moment, Cavour returned to power in Turin. This was in 1860, the apogee of the Second Empire. But, at the same time, it was not the end of the Roman difficulties."

Of course, one of the chief personages in this whole Italian question was Count Cavour. In notes penned by the Emperor after the Italian war, the Count is frequently mentioned. Napoleon then wrote: "At the beginning of the summer of 1858, a very important event occurred, unknown, however, to the Empress who was very much opposed to all ideas of an Italian alliance and only saw in such plans a danger for France and the dynasty. I, on the contrary, was much inclined to seek, by every means in my power, to realize my plan of fortifying the Italian nationality and doing all I could to help

the king of Sardinia. It has been said that I was actuated by promises given by the Carbonari and even to Orsini himself. It is not necessary to have recourse to such reasons to explain my course. Always clinging to the theory of nationalities, I was very fond of the idea of an Italy, freed from the yoke of Austria and become free, by degrees, as far as the Adriatic. In thought, I excepted the States of the Holy See, with which I entertained warm relations as a fervent Catholic who respected the rights acquired by the Church; the kingdom of Naples, supported by Alexander of Russia; and perhaps also some of the Italian principalities, the annexation of which might have been dangerous, to the general peace. But I had long accepted the idea that, in agreement with Victor Emmanuel and Count Cavour, Italy would have a free hand in the north and in a part of the center on condition that Italy offered certain compensation to France. In this way, I hoped to satisfy liberal public opinion, to emancipate Italy from a long and severe servitude, and to win the profound gratitude of a people thus restored to its true and natural autonomy. I kept my secret, for I knew what would have been the opposition of the Empress and of my minister of Foreign Affairs, Count Walewski, who was entirely opposed to Count Cavour's ideas.

"Camille Benso, who became later Count Cavour, and whose unflagging perseverance was to help so greatly to the rise to power of Piedmont, was born at Turin and at the time I am now speaking of, was about 48 years of age. His father was of Piedmontese, his mother of French, origin. His family was proud to claim kindredship with Saint Francis of

Sales. He had passed through the military school at Turin, where he had been a member of the 'pages' corps. Owing to his marked independence of spirit, he soon left the household of Charles Albert, the future king, and in 1830, at the time of the French revolution of that year, was an artillery officer. Charles Albert was suspicious of this young officer who declared himself a partisan of the revolution and sent him to the fort of Bard, where he was to take part in preparing the defensive works. Cavour considered this a disgrace, threw up his commission, and returned to civil life. Near Verceil, in one of his father's landed properties, he busied himself with agriculture, experimenting on the products of certain lands, on artificial manure, etc., thus exhibiting an enquiring and economic mind. He succeeded, where so many before and after him have failed, in making a large fortune in agriculture, thanks to which he was able, in 1847, to found a newspaper which he named *Il Risorgimento.*

"During the long years in which he had not, to outward appearance at least, taken any interest in politics, Cavour made many journeys to England, France and Switzerland. He became intimate with Baron de Barante, Louis Philippe's minister at Turin, and Comte d'Hausonville, secretary to the legation. This gave him his entrée into most of the interesting salons of Paris, where he was specially seen at the Duc de Broglie's, the Marquis de Castellane's, the Comtesse de Circourt's, and other leading families. He had a great social success, for he had a charming manner, when he wished, and spoke French better than Italian, it always seemed to me. It was at this time, I believe, that I first made his

acquaintance. At this moment he favored the political opinions of the Duc de Broglie, Comte Molé, M. Guizot and their party and professed great admiration for Englishmen, though not for their politics. He blamed them, on the one hand, for being on friendly terms with Prince Metternich, and on the other, for encouraging the ultra-radicals in Greece, Portugal and Spain. No doubt, even at that early date, he felt that the liberal parties of Italy could not rely upon England and would find help only from France. If I am not mistaken, he once told me that such was the state of his mind at that date.

"The Italian revolution of 1848 put Cavour in power and in 1850 he became minister of agriculture, commerce and marine, in spite of the rather lukewarm approval of Victor Emmanuel, who at first hesitated to nominate him, and warned the other ministers to beware of him! He once told me that such was really the case. But his great activity and intelligence, frankly admitted by his colleagues, quickly won for him a preponderant position in the ministerial council, and very soon he held another portfolio, that of finance, one of the most important at this moment, when ways and means were not secondary even to diplomacy, which did not play the first rôle until a few years later.

"I have always considered—and my views were shared by the leading public men of Europe at that period—that Cavour was the true creator of 'the Italian question' and he followed up his ideas with rare perseverance, never growing weary and never ceasing to propagate his opinions. He soon found, furthermore, a powerful help in King Victor Em-

manuel. But they both early and clearly saw that they could do nothing that would be final without the assistance of France. More than once has Cavour told me that he relied on me, 'whose liberal opinions were no secret to him.' Like myself, he counted on the power of the press, and like myself, he did not hesitate to gain information from secret agents who were not the accredited official diplomatic agents. It was not long before he secured my warm coöperation, which, though somewhat moderate at first, soon became very strong; for in our anti-Austrian diplomacy, we could do nothing, one without the other. In order to win me over still more completely, Cavour decided Victor Emmanuel to send a detachment of Sardinian troops to the Crimea during that war. Though Piedmontese interests could not be mixed up in the quarrel with Russia, Cavour felt that in the near future, it might be useful to have taken part in the expedition, for he would thus be in a better position to put 'the Italian question' squarely before the Congress that was sure to be convened after the close of the struggle.

"Did Cavour think, at that date, of creating the political unity of the whole Peninsula? It is hardly possible. I believe with Count Benedetti, a very great authority on Italian matters, that his only object at that time was to enfranchise the north of Italy. Ever since his entrance on the political stage, Cavour had expressed no other wish than this more modest one. He so little expected a fusion of all the Italian countries into one, that, up to then, all the schemes which he conceived and described, contained no sign of such a thing as Italian unity. At the time of the meeting of the congress and during

his whole stay in Paris, he suggested many such schemes which were all subordinated to the territorial condition of the Peninsula as it was then; they even guaranteed its maintenance. In fact, in 1856, I myself had no thought of bringing about Italian unity. My only hope at that date was of freeing Lombardy and Venetia from Austria and of obtaining in exchange for this help the province of Savoy.

"I welcomed Count Cavour to Paris very warmly, and invited him to a rather private dinner-party held at the Tuileries on February 21, 1856. The minister had the audacity at this time to write to one of his friends: 'I am enrolling in the ranks of diplomacy, a very beautiful countess, and encouraging her to coquet and charm, if necessary, the Emperor.'

"This statement, made to Chevalier Cabraria, is not without importance. It is true that the Countess Castiglione had received a mission of this sort for some political purpose, but I saw all the danger of such a course, and did not allow the countess to go as far as she may have hoped to go.

"On February 22nd, Count Cavour received a visit from Dr. Conneau, who informed him that he was authorized to act as an intermediary for all secret communications between France and Sardinia. He soon learnt also that the correspondents in Paris of English papers had been requested to support the Piedmontese cause, in so far as this was possible. Thus encouraged, Cavour would have liked to go further, but for the time being he obtained nothing beyond the possibility of laying the Italian question before the congress, without, however, solving it. Nevertheless, it was a first step.

He was obliged to content himself with that effort and left for Turin hoping that soon the Piedmontese antipathy for Austria would be more or less shared by France. In the meantime, he began to prepare for war; and as early as August—at which time the Marquis of Villamarina received encouragement from the Emperor—he was assured that, at the right moment, he might rely on France coming to the aid, in an effective manner, of Victor Emmanuel's government.

"At the inauguration of the Mont Cenis tunnel, Prince Napoleon, delegated by the Tuileries, was received with great pomp. This was on August 31st. After the ceremony, the king and prince left for Chambéry, where a banquet of 150 guests was served. Cries of 'God save the King' and 'God save the Emperor' were mingled. The king accompanied Prince Napoleon back to the French frontier, and the royal yacht anchored in French waters. All of these attentions were significant and showed how desirous the Italian government was to cultivate good relations with us. Yet, all this time, my sympathy for the Italian cause remained somewhat platonic. At the Stuttgart interview, which took place during the summer, I was able to realize that the Czar, who was far from favorably inclined towards Austria, energetically supported the King of Naples in his efforts to preserve his throne which was threatened by Piedmont. The Russian government, I clearly saw, would openly oppose any revolutionary policy in Italy, and Cavour, who had been too ready to count on success, was forced to moderate his activity and to work in secret for the fulfillment of his plans and hopes. Then came January with

the Orsini attack, which, at first sight, seemed likely to compromise the good understanding between France and Piedmont, followed by the publication in the official Gazette of Piedmont of the letters written by Orsini at the moment when he went to the scaffold. This seemed to change the current of opinion in the other direction. Such a publication, full of menaces for Austria, could only have been made, it was said, with my consent. Of course, there was exaggeration on both sides. Those who declared that I had formally promised Orsini to free Italy knew nothing of the negotiations which had been begun long before he appeared on the scene. The truth is that I had not yet made up my mind one way or the other, and Count Cavour's hopes remained vague and hesitating. They were destined only to take a decided form at the time of the meetings between myself and Cavour at Plombières, in 1858. All of this is a good example of a fact that the public so often overlooks when it tries to penetrate the meaning of contemporary politics,—viz.: The character and acts of the individuals on the stage cannot always be correctly understood, and, what they say or think during official diplomatic meetings, is frequently more or less imperfectly reported, if reported at all. It is only years afterwards, when documents can be seen and when memoirs have been published, that an intelligent historian can give an approximately correct account of the event."

Another set of notes turns on the Plombières meeting. They read as follows: "Cavour's opinions were well known in certain political circles, but what was not so well known, was the extent to which I shared and encouraged his views. Count Walewski

was entirely opposed to them, and the Empress considered them very full of danger to the political and religious future; nor did she make any secret of her opinion. On this occasion, however, I did not consult them; but, according to my custom, gauged and prepared public opinion, not through the official newspapers, which represented rather the opinions of the ministers instead of my own, but in certain of the opposition sheets.

"Having made up my mind as to how I would act under certain circumstances, I set quietly to work. Conneau, who had my entire confidence, was entrusted with an important mission in May, 1858. He went to Turin, where he saw the King Victor Emmanuel and Count Cavour, with both of whom he had conversations. He spoke of my sympathies for the court of Turin, having received instructions to that effect, and then stated that I intended spending the month of July at Plombières, where I would be pleased to meet the prime minister of Piedmont. Count Cavour did not fail to seize the opportunity thus offered, and replied quickly that he also meant to take some rest, he said he had chosen Switzerland for this purpose, and from there would come and pay his respects to me at Plombières, if he were authorized to take such a step.

"From that moment on, Cavour was restlessly anxious lest the meeting on which he built such hopes, might, after all, not take place. On June 19th, he wrote to the Marquis de Villamarina: 'I am impatiently waiting to hear whether the Emperor tends to follow up the hints made by Conneau, inviting me to visit him at Plombières.' He then added: 'Walewski and the greater number of French

political agents represent only petty passions,—none of the lofty thoughts held by the Emperor personally.' It seemed necessary, however, to help on the realization of these 'lofty thoughts' and consequently Cavour was anxious lest any counter-current should upset my plans.

"Cavour started on his 'vacation' in the first part of July, announcing through the society columns of the journals that he was going first to Savoy and thence to Switzerland. He was careful to take with him two passports, one in his own name as President of the Council, the other in the name of Giuseppe Benso, 'traveling to Switzerland and France.' He took every precaution to hide his plans even from his most intimate friends so that the important object of his journey should not leak out. To the Countess of Circourt, who pressed him to come and see her at Bougival, near Paris, he replied that if he went to France at that time, his journey would certainly give rise to comment. 'I am going to Switzerland,' he added, 'to breathe the pure mountain air, far from men who think only of politics.' He said, further, that he intended to stop at Pressinge, with the de la Rives, his friends, where he would 'certainly not conspire against the peace of the world.' He did stop at Pressinge, where he rested some little while, and thence he took away a good supply of English novels to 'while away the dullness of the route.' These characteristic facts I learned later.

"On his arrival at Geneva, Cavour received the desired announcement. A letter from General de Béville, one of my aides-de-camp informed him that 'the sovereign would be delighted to welcome him

at Plombières.' Friends say that Cavour was charmed; at last his wishes were taking form; 'the drama is drawing to a close,' he wrote to La Marmora, the only one of his colleagues to whom he had confided. He was more and more anxious, I understand, as the time approached for his start to Plombières. Being a thoughtful man, he took every necessary precaution, thinking of everything, and even asked that the Prince de la Tour d'Auvergne-Lauraguais, French minister to Turin, be advised of his proposed trip. The minister's brother was on my military staff, and it would have been awkward if the minister had heard, in a roundabout way, what was really going on. At least such was the opinion of the circumspect Count.

"On July 20, 1858, Cavour reached Plombières. The following morning at eleven, he was received by me. The details of the interview which then took place were, for a long time, not very well known; but there is no good reason why this mystery should continue. I may say, therefore, that I went straight to the heart of the subject, and declared our readiness to sustain Piedmont in a war against Austria, on the double condition that the struggle should not assume a revolutionary character and that it should be given some pretext which should appear plausible in the eyes of European diplomacy. For this pretext Cavour proposed the non-execution by Austria of certain treaties of commerce and the abusive extension of her power in the Romagna and the Duchies. The first reason seemed insufficient to me. As to the second, I replied categorically that, so long as French troops occupied Rome, I could not ask Austria to withdraw hers from Bologna and Ancona.

I added that I intended to be absolutely friendly with Rome, because of our Catholics at home, and with Naples because of the decided friendship which I felt for Emperor Alexander II and which made it almost a point of honor on my part to protect King Ferdinand.

"Count Cavour then proposed a side-issue: 'Let Rome be left to the Pope,' he said, 'and Naples to its king. But let us agree to permit an insurrection in the Romagna and in the province belonging to Naples, the moment the inhabitants of those parts show a desire to shake off a yoke which galls them.' I did not feel in a position to give a decisive answer, so I remained silent, which was interpreted by Cavour as acquiescence. It was, in fact, hard for us to find a really good pretext for making war. I hesitated, and I noticed that Cavour was nervous over this hesitation. But how could I have acted otherwise, under the circumstances? We had both studied the whole matter of the Peninsula without hitting on any good plan of action. There was some talk of seeing what could be done in the Duchy of Modena, which was a sort of natural prolongation of the Sardinian states. Efforts had been going on there actively for some time past, to turn the inhabitants from their sovereign. If an insurrection were brought about, the Duke of Modena would naturally fall back on Austria for protection, and Piedmont, declaring its safety threatened, might ask succor from France. This might suffice as the first spark of the more general conflagration. Or would the war remain localized? What would be the attitude of Prussia in such an event? If she remained undecided, peace would soon be concluded. England

would be neutral and Russia indifferent, so long as the Neapolitan provinces were left alone. After a rapidly arranged peace, after a short and victorious campaign, how would the territory be distributed? Such were some of the questions and speculations that came before us.

"The following conclusions were finally arrived at in the course of our interview. We were of the opinion that the Peninsula might be divided into four states: I. Piedmont, to which would be added Lombardy, Venetia, Parma and the Legations. II. Tuscany with Umbria would form the kingdom of central Italy. To please the house of Bourbon, I would have liked to put the Duchess of Parma and her son at the head of that kingdom. Cavour did not oppose the plan in principle, knowing that he could easily manage a tottering throne occupied only by a feeble woman and her child. III. In the pontifical states, the Pope would retain Rome, lose the legations, and take the title of President of the Italian Confederacy. IV. The kingdom of the Two Sicilies, which would be preserved, largely out of consideration for the Czar.

"It would seem that, for the time being—as then there could not be any question of Italian unity—Cavour should have felt well satisfied with what he had accomplished. With this western kingdom stretching from the Alps to the Adriatic would it not be possible, later on, to absorb a portion of the remainder, perhaps even the whole of the remainder? We were both inclined to answer this question in the affirmative.

"In exchange for this open or tacit approval of his plan, what would be the advantage to France?

This was the question I put to Cavour. In the first place, I proposed the cession of Savoy. Cavour, while reminding me that Savoy was the cradle of the royal family, made no absolute objection. But such was not the case when I hinted that I might be obliged to demand the county of Nice. The reply came immediately: "Nice is Italian; if we cede it, what is to become of the principle of nationalties?' I as quickly answered: 'That is a secondary question which can be settled later on.'

"The interview ended at this point. It was nearly three o'clock. Saying good-by to Count Cavour, I requested him to return at four o'clock for a phaeton drive. He accepted my invitation, and we quietly drove through the forests and valleys of the Vosges, both of us talking all the time the drive lasted. I seized the occasion to tell Cavour what were my plans regarding family matters. I hinted at the possibility of marrying Princess Clotilde, daughter of King Victor Emmanuel, to Prince Napoleon. Cavour was not surprised. It appeared that the matter had already been talked over, but Victor Emmanuel had charged his minister not to make any promises on this particularly important matter, unless it became an absolutely necessary condition to the alliance. Cavour ventured to offer a few objections,—'Princess Clotilde's youth, the well-known wildness of Prince Napoleon, his fiery, passionate nature, his occasional lack of calm judgment, his arbitrary and at times paradoxical character.' I came to the defense of my cousin. 'He has often caused me worry and annoyance, that I am ready to admit. He loves to contradict, and is overfond of squabbling; but he is very witty, has

more sense than most persons believe, and possesses a very kind heart.' I then went on and spoke of his faithfulness to friends, mentioning several instances of this kind. Finally, in short, I laid great stress on the union which I then so much desired to bring about. I returned to the subject several times. 'I quite understand,' I said, 'that the youth of the Princess makes it necessary to wait some time, but I hope for a favorable reply in the end.'

"It was nightfall when we returned to Plombières. Count Cavour withdrew immediately on leaving the carriage. My last words to him were: 'Rely on me as I rely on you.' Forthwith, Cavour left Plombières and the very next day commenced his long report to King Victor Emmanuel. In it, he gave every detail of the interview of which I of course note here only the essential points."

One of the confidential friends of both the Emperor and the Empress, whose name I am not free to make public, writes as follows concerning this important Plombières interview: "Cavour had evidently noted what, in the eyes of the Emperor, would have an overwhelming importance and might, if carried through, put a stop to his hesitations, if he still retained any, concerning an alliance with the ancient House of Savoy. I refer to this marriage project. The political alliance might no doubt be brought about without this family alliance; but this last would alone produce a useful and lasting bond. Cavour readily grasped this important point, though in appearance the question had not been treated as other than a secondary one. He now sought to make his master realize its import. Talking to the Emperor, he had been unwilling to compromise himself

by seeming to have an opinion; but writing to Victor Emmanuel, he became a warm pleader for this proposed alliance, which he considered as important as it was timely. Count Cavour dwelt strongly on the high position occupied by Prince Napoleon,—'first Prince of the blood in the first empire of the world; bearing the most illustrious name of modern times; allied by his mother to the house of Wurtemberg, and to other reigning houses, notably that of the Romanoffs; and as near the throne as it was possible to be'; for he was, at that moment, separated from supreme power only by a child two years old. Cavour made excuses for the questionable conduct of the Prince, pointing out that he had never caused a scandal, and assured the King that there was no other choice to make for his daughter since it was decided not to seek an alliance in Austria, nor with the Bourbons. 'Unless your Majesty takes a Napoleon,' wrote Cavour, 'you will be forced to choose a prince of the house of Bragance or a secondary prince of Germany.' Then the Minister took up the various possibilities of such a union, and asked whether 'other alliances would bring greater happiness to the married couple?' He cited cases which had occurred even in the house of Savoy, where certain matrimonial alliances had not proved 'brimful of joy, though, to all appearance, they had seemed to promise every hope in that respect.' Such was the general tenor of Cavour's correspondence with the King on this delicate subject, several parts of which have never been made public."

Napoleon III's notes continue as follows: "Cavour, after our Plombières interview, went to Baden, where, I am told, he appeared light-hearted, free

from the weight of public affairs and evidently not bothering himself about diplomacy or politics. He traveled through Switzerland like a tourist, as he had intended; he visited the Grisons, Zurich, Constance, and the banks of Lake Locarno, where he became the guest of one of his former political adversaries, M. Brofferio, of the extreme Left, with whom he cautiously discussed political matters. These details were furnished us by our diplomatic consular and other agents in the parts where he appeared.

"Meanwhile, Cavour's report to the King had been carried to Turin by an attaché at the Sardinian Legation of Berne, and the Count then started for home in order to gauge the effect of his disclosures. Victor Emmanuel immediately perceived what he might hope from the Plombières interview. The moment seemed to have come when he must throw his sword into the balance, or remain henceforth in an inferior position. He quickly accepted the situation and uttered, I was told, these significant words: 'In a year I shall be king of Italy, or merely Monsieur de Savoie.'

"The official and semi-official papers barely spoke of the Piedmontese minister's visit to Plombières. On July 24th a telegraphic agency sent the following dispatch to the newspapers: 'Count Cavour has left Plombières, after a stay of some 26 hours.' This is about all that got into the public prints concerning our meeting. In fact, the interview was kept secret for some time, and even later on, it was very slightly commented upon. My intimate confidents alone knew what was taking place. A certain alteration in my tone, when talking of Vienna, was said,

at the time, to be noticeable, and it was further disclosed, with considerable truth, that the English press was being sounded with a view to a favorable change of attitude towards Italy. I learned afterwards that one of the ministers was surprised one afternoon to see me 'much absorbed in a study of the map of Italy, and remarked on the fact to his colleagues.' I carefully avoided the topic in my conversations with the Empress and Count Walewski. But the latter was much alarmed at what he began to divine, and eventually broached the subject to me, when I then laid bare my plan of the establishment of one vast kingdom in the valley of the Po. Count Walewski expressed his fears, for he could not close his eyes to the fact that such changes in Italy would necessarily bring about alterations in Germany. In this opinion he was supported by the Empress.

"Meanwhile, the official newspapers and those which were inspired by the friends of the Tuileries, published 'Italian notes.' The more advanced Paris sheets were filled with the old liberal ideas, tending indeed almost to revolutionary forms of speech; the *Presse* and the *Siècle* were among the number that especially distinguished themselves in this respect. The *Moniteur* published unexpected articles from the brilliant pen of Edmond About, which caused some sensation. They attacked the pontifical government, declaring it to be contrary to all the best ideas of civilization, and demanding its suppression as a useful and necessary step in the right direction. It naturally caused surprise in some quarters to read such articles in the official *Moniteur,* and it began to be whispered that some of the intimate guests of the Tuileries court were responsible for this cam-

paign. But it was quite false. It is more probable that the Palais Royal was responsible! The articles were tolerated because they were a means of awaking public opinion on the whole grave subject, and did not necessarily represent my personal ideas on the question. The truth is, I confess, that this way of setting the public to thinking was never distasteful to me. In order to get a solid grasp of the French mind, it is often necessary to present facts in an original and striking manner. And nobody knew how to do this better than Prince Napoleon.

"Public opinion, especially in Italy, was further excited at this moment by the Mortara incident. A young Jew, who had fallen ill, was baptized by a Christian servant, and the Roman Curia declared that the child should be retained in the Catholic Church. Thereupon he was taken from his parents, and shut up in a convent. The affair caused much discussion in the Catholic and Anti-catholic papers. Cavour took advantage of this high-handed act to advance his policy. He even succeeded in exerting a certain influence in the Holy See, for he had friends in the Vatican itself. The public mind became wildly excited in Italy, and liberal or revolutionary societies were encouraged to propagate their ideas and teachings throughout the country. Publications aimed against the Duke of Modena, the Holy See, the Austrian occupation, etc., were tolerated by the authorities. In October, the National Society even submitted a plan of insurrection to Cavour for his approval. An uprising was being prepared in Tuscany, and in Massa-Carrara; it was hoped that the Grand Duke of Tuscany would willingly descend from his throne. So greatly were all minds excited

throughout three-quarters of the Peninsula that even had I wished to prevent the insurrection at the end of the autumn of 1858, I would have found it impossible to do so. The plot was well laid; Garibaldi, the able revolutionist La Farina, and other chiefs of the popular movement, had each an assigned mission. Alongside of the regular army, supported, as it was thought, by France for important events—which meant the loss of Lombardy to the anti-Italian cause—they had organized an internal revolution which they hoped was to unseat princes of their thrones and put an end to 'the hesitations of Napoleon III' who, even after the expected victory, they feared 'might be unwilling to accept in its entirety the accomplished fact.' ''

But the Emperor had not yet said his last word, and while Piedmont and the revolutionary societies were polishing their arms for the coming fray, he turned public attention, for the moment, at least, away from this Italian turmoil, by the interview he was going to have with Queen Victoria at Cherbourg. This interview was most important for the ''Italian question,'' as it was destined to sweep away the clouds which had gathered after the anti-English ''Address of the colonels'' and the Orsini affair, while, at the same time, it enabled the Emperor to sound the intentions of England concerning Italian eventualities.

The foregoing rather detailed account of the relations of the Emperor and Count Cavour is an excellent illustration of a fact more than once pointed out in these memoirs, viz., the energetic and catholic manner in which Napoleon III treated European affairs. He never believed that the ruler of France

could confine himself to French politics alone and especially to French home matters. In January, 1866, when the relations between the United States and France were very much strained over the Mexican situation, the Emperor remarked one day: "This Monroe Doctrine is all very well, perhaps for America. But what a blessing it is that France is not weighed down by such a dictum. Think of it; why, if I were prevented by public opinion from participating in the great international questions of the world, I really believe that I would prefer Ham to the Tuileries!" The Empress was sometimes criticized for taking an interest in foreign affairs, and, in rare instances, for exerting an influence for the welfare of the country, as she understood it. But this was the spirit which prevailed at the court of the Second Empire and the Emperor himself set the example. "We are all internationalists, in the best sense of the word," he remarked at a time when the word had hardly got the unpleasant meaning which is now sometimes given to it. How then could Eugénie, living in such an atmosphere, help taking an active interest in international politics?

CHAPTER IV

THE MEXICAN EXPEDITION

Although, as years pass on, criticism grows more kindly towards the Second Empire, yet some of its politics continue to be severely blamed, and sometimes the Empress is made the scapegoat. Thus, the much-vilified Mexican expedition is declared to be the cause of all the final disasters. We are told that, because the best troops were occupied beyond the seas, it was impossible for France to intervene effectively in the events of 1866, when Prussia made her first great step towards the hegemony of Germany. In vain, historians of weight have proved by figures and well-established arguments that the expedition to Mexico absorbed neither the number of men nor the quantity of money alleged. But the belief in these assertions has remained rooted. It is true that in 1866, the Emperor hesitated to make an armed intervention, and it is also true that he afterwards regretted having yielded to the pressure of timid minds instead of giving ear to the well-advised counselors who urged him strike then and there. But what is not true is that Marshal Randon, minister of war, ever said that he was not in a position to send from a hundred to two hundred thousand men to the borders of the Rhine, and this because of "the drain due to the Mexican expedition." Such a step could have been

taken, and if it was not taken, this was due not to Mexican exigencies, but to continental considerations. That is the real fact.

It has also been said that the Empress was the person who conceived the Mexican expedition, "the finest idea of the Imperial reign," as it was called. There is some truth in this assertion. The Empress was as ready to assume some of the responsibility for this act, as she was to deny all complicity in the war of 1870, a charge often laid most unjustly at her door, which I have treated elsewhere in these memoirs. She felt then and she always felt that there was much justification for this expedition. There was justice to be dealt out to those who had been subjected to tyrannical abuse; European and catholic support to be given to molested fellow-countrymen; a limit to be set to the growing power of the United States. Then, there was a similarity of races and interests common to Frenchmen and Spaniards. Later, when the crown was offered to Maximilian, it seemed to the Empress a sort of compensation to the House of Austria, which France had humiliated in the Italian campaign. Again, it appeared to her chivalrous for French and Spaniards to unite in an effort to give good government to a land so rich in its past history and with such a magnificent future before it, but then cursed with envious leaders and threatened with anarchy.

France's right to interfere in the internal affairs of another nation has been questioned. We are informed that this was a violation of the "rights of nations." But had the Third Republic any right to "take over" Tunis and Madagascar? Had England, then, any honest ground for suppressing the

Boer republic? France's only aim in going to Mexico was to protect her outraged fellow-countrymen and the citizens of allied powers, and to obtain guarantees that similar abuses should not occur in the future. If France had not acted, the United States would have done so, as soon as it had finished with its Civil War, which was then raging. This is evident from the message of President Buchanan to Congress, promulgated some little time before, drawing its attention to the reprehensible acts of certain South American republics, and especially that of Mexico, and asking for authority to use military force in order to obtain payment of an indemnity for past shortcomings and a guarantee for future good conduct. This was all that France was doing. The fact of the matter is that if the expedition had succeeded and had not ended with the dreadful tragedy of Queretaro, no blame would ever have been laid on the Empress. The Emperor once said it all reminded him of the saying of La Rochefoucauld: "As most people consider only the appearance of things, their judgments are based solely on results, so that a design of a plan seems to them well formed or well carried through only when the result is good." If France had succeeded in Mexico and if the good Maximilian had seated himself solidly on his throne, and established an orderly government there, France's praises would have been sung throughout two hemispheres.

Nor must it be forgotten that many of the causes which led up to the Mexican expedition happened in Paris. The beginnings of this somewhat complicated affair carry us back before the year 1860, when some Mexican families deprived of their prop-

erty and driven from their country by continual civil war, came and settled in Paris. The court knew some of these worthy citizens personally and saw that their rights and interests had been ruthlessly trampled upon. At the same time, citizens of other countries—England, France and Spain—made similar complaints, which were transmitted to their respective governments and then laid before the Mexican government. A conference was thereupon called at London and the Mexican congress agreed to pay all the indemnities. But this promise was never kept and thence, in a word, grew the expedition to Mexico, the general details of which need not be gone into here. But a word may be said about the French way of looking at the conduct of the United States at this juncture; and what I state here were also the views of the Emperor.

The powers most affected by the misdeeds of Mexico were France, England and Spain; and these three states determined to act conjointly in an effort to secure justice for their respective citizens. They signed an agreement for this purpose on October 31, 1861. The United States was then invited to join them. But the American government declined, offering as an excuse the tradition which forbade them from entering into an alliance of any kind with European nations, adding that they entertained the most friendly sentiments towards Mexico. "This was only a bit of Yankee shrewdness" said the Emperor, when he read this part of Mr. Seward's dispatch. Furthermore, the United States at this moment had its hands full with the Secession war. At the beginning of French operations, the Washington government made no further

observations on the subject, though they let France see that they would take no part in her coercive measures. However, the whole manner of the Washington cabinet changed when Maximilian proclaimed himself emperor of Mexico. "But as America had recognized the Empire of Brazil," said Napoleon on this occasion, and with great logic it has always seemed to me, "why could she not also recognize the Empire of Mexico?" The Emperor developed this idea in a state paper which was transmitted to Washington. But Mr. Seward's reply was as courteous as it was hostile to that way of looking at the matter, and then, for the first time, Napoleon saw that he had got himself into an awkward position with the United States. "I regret this so much," said the Emperor to the Empress the next day after Mr. Seward's dispatch had been presented by the American Minister, who was, if I am not mistaken, that charming man of the world, John Bigelow, "for I can never forget the kindly way I was received on American soil in my dark days." In fact this hostility showed itself, Napoleon learned by diplomatic agents, in various parts of the new world in a most practical way by open aid of various kinds given to the Mexican President Juarez, and this course was accentuated when the Secession conflict came to an end with the victory of the north.

The Emperor's opinion of this attitude was once stated by him as follows: "If the Washington cabinet had sided with us instead of showing itself neutral or actually helping Juarez the result of the Mexican expedition would have been quite different." When, at a much later period, this remark

was repeated to John Bigelow, by a common friend, the witty American diplomat replied: "Of course, if the United States had not been the United States, what the Emperor wished for might have happened. But how could Napoleon know American sentiment after his own short visit to our shores, and especially when he was so inadequately represented at Washington at this time?" A distinguished American ambassador once made this remark, which should be placed here. Referring to this ill-fated expedition, this gentleman, who later held very high office at Washington, said: "The Emperor quite overlooked the full bearing of the Monroe Doctrine, which, it is true, was not then so broad and all-embracing (the diplomat in question smiled at this point) as it is now, but which, nevertheless, was not a weakling even in the sixties. The Emperor and his advisers must have known that the United States saw a danger, and a very great one, in the establishment, right on its borders, of a monarchy supported by the monarchies of Europe." The Empress replied: "But the danger would not have been slight to have a revolutionary government right at your doors." "Yes, but the government of Mexico for many years has been more stable than many European governments." "That is true, but the reason is because it has been blessed with a presidential monarch." The diplomat showed by the expression of his face that he was not far from sharing Eugénie's view, though he naturally said nothing.

The French expedition was under the command of Admiral Jurien de la Gravière, with whom the Empress had many talks before he sailed. So she knew all the ins and outs of the affair. One hears of

his saying one day to the Emperor in her presence: "As I understand it, the object of this expedition is not simply to enforce respect from the government of Mexico, but also to seize the opportunity of opening up new commercial connections which is a great need just now on account of the interruption of all our trade with the United States because of the Civil war." This statement was quite true, and should be kept in mind, in grasping the whole meaning of this undertaking.

Another feature of the expedition about which we spoke considerably at this moment was Marshal Prim's part therein. With his innate love of intrigue, which was so dangerous a few years later at the time of the Hohenzollern candidature, Prim found the Mexican expedition made to his hand. After Admiral de la Gravière's return, he said to the Empress one day, speaking of this period: "Prim was of course anxious to have a finger in the pie and to further his own plans. He so managed that the Spanish contingent was greater than the united forces of France and England. He also made haste with the Spanish fleet, so that when I got to Havana, I learned that the Spaniards were already at Vera Cruz. Hardly had Prim landed before he issued a surprising proclamation to the Mexican people, urging them to submit to an unworthy government from which three powers were then demanding reparation for legitimate damages. He was thus leaning towards the liberal party notwithstanding the promises of support which he had previously given to the conservatives. This untimely proclamation was not of a nature to calm the Mexicans who looked upon it as a snare, and it natu-

rally offended the conservative party and the allied powers. Furthermore, the arrival of the Spanish fleet had spread a certain fear throughout the country, where the old troubles with Spain were still too fresh in the public mind. Consequently, the inhabitants fled before the Spaniards, so that when we landed, we found a desert before us, and it was with the greatest difficulty that we could feed our troops. Under such circumstances the English even hesitated whether the enterprise should be continued further. In a word, Prim was the enfant terrible of the Mexican expedition."

The admiral finally became convinced that the wise thing for France to do was to follow the example set by England and Spain and withdraw from the country before getting dragged further into an inextricable situation. But such a course was not considered possible at Paris, and the admiral was allowed to return to France, not to lay down his command, but to explain to the Emperor and the nation, the real condition of affairs in Mexico. It is remembered that, when he came to the Tuileries to a rather private dinner party, and met the Emperor for the first time since returning from Mexico, there was much lively curiosity to see how he would be received at Court, and especially by the Emperor. The gallant admiral had been apprised that he might expect a cool reception, and his first steps in the drawing-room made him feel that such was indeed the case; for some of the guests thought they were taking the right cue, and were very cold. But suddenly, to the surprise of all except the Empress, the Emperor hastily advanced to receive the admiral, with both hands extended and a kindly

smile on his face. Then the whole manner of the guests changed. They crowded around the admiral, put questions to him about the situation in Mexico and even felicitated him on the excellent fashion in which he had conducted the operations! The Empress used, years afterwards, to laugh over this famous dinner party.

It cannot be denied that the Mexican expedition was very unpopular in France. The people did not understand the reasons for it and could not see what benefit could be drawn from it. Consequently, it gave rise only to distrust and aversion. The Emperor could not openly declare that France went to Mexico to establish French influence in Central America; for, by so doing, he would have compromized our relations with the United States. His silence, made necessary by these political causes, was the chief reason for a misunderstanding which subsisted between the Emperor and the nation during five long years. If it had been possible to publish the detailed letter of instructions to General Forey, who was finally put in command in Mexico, which letter was drawn up under the eye of the Emperor himself,—if this had been possible, the public would have had a better understanding of the whole complicated question. But home and international considerations would not permit of this. In fact, even to-day, when these objections no longer exist, partisan writers on this period of the Second Empire are apt to pass over in silence or only barely touch upon this important document. It is not my intention to give it in full here; but I cannot forbear making a few extracts from it, especially as I do so from an exact copy of the original letter,

if it be not the letter itself, about which myself and my friends are not absolutely sure. I mention this because the letter has not always been exactly quoted, even by those who wished to use it with the best intentions. Its spirit and gist are in the following quotations.

Writing from Fontainebleau, on July 3, 1862, the Emperor said: "On your arrival welcome with the greatest kindliness all Mexicans who seek you. Espouse no party quarrels. Show great deference for religious beliefs. Maintain very strict discipline and severely repress all acts, all words, which could wound Mexican spirit; for it is essential not to forget what a proud race they are. As soon as you reach the city of Mexico organize a temporary government, which will submit to a vote of the Mexican people the question as to the political system to be established. The aim in view is not to force the Mexicans to adopt a form of government which they may not like, but to aid them in their efforts to establish, by their own free will, a government which is likely to have stability and can assure France the redress of the grievances which we have. It is needless to say that if they prefer a monarchy, it is to the interest of France to guide them in that direction.

"There will be no lack of people who will ask why we go to Mexico; why we risk money and the lives of men in order to found a government there. Here is the answer. In the state of civilization to which the world has arrived, Europe cannot view with indifference the prosperity of the United States; for it is that country which buys our manufactures and aids our commerce. It is to our inter-

est, therefore, that the United States should be powerful; but it is not at all to our interest to see her seize the whole gulf of Mexico and become the sole dispenser of the products of the new world. To-day, we learn by sad experience, how precarious the fate of an industry becomes when it is reduced to being forced to seek its raw materials from one market only and has to depend on the ever-changing conditions of that market. But, if Mexico preserved her independence and the integrity of her territory, and if a firm government is established there with the aid of France, we shall have given the Latin race, on the other side of the Ocean, the means of recovering its strength and prestige, we shall have secured the safety of our colonies and those of Spain in the Antilles; we shall have re-established our influence in the center of America, and that influence, creating great openings for our trade, will also bring back to us here in France the materials indispensable for our home industries. Thus regenerated, Mexico will always be favorably inclined towards us, not merely from a feeling of gratitude, but because her interests will be our interests and because she will find support from us in maintaining friendly connections with the European powers. So it is not only our military honor which is to-day at stake, but also our political needs, our industrial and commercial interests. Everything, in fact, makes it plain that it is our duty to boldly plant our flag on Mexican soil and to establish in that country either a monarchy, if it is not incompatible with the national sentiments of the people, or at any rate a government which shall promise a certain amount of stability."

This clear explanation of the Emperor's generous ideas show what were the guiding principles of this Mexican expedition. But public opinion was most unfortunately uninformed on all these heads and the result was that it was impossible to act boldly; it was necessary to curtail and restrict those very measures which would have ensured success.

The war became serious, and after considerable fighting, Juarez was driven from his capital. The question now was as to the form of government, and then Paris became a center of particular interest in this Mexican affair. The Empress participated, generally as a silent spectator, in all the various discussions and interviews that took place at the Tuileries and at Saint Cloud, concerning the sovereign and form of government best suited for Mexico. The candidature of Archduke Maximilian, which had long been under examination, was now revived afresh. The influence of the friendly Austrian ambassador to France lent support to a plan which he saw was agreeable to us. "If this is done," the Emperor said one morning, "it will not only draw us nearer to Austria, but I think it will be looked upon with much pleasure of Vienna." And I have reason to believe that the latter part of this statement was especially true, notwithstanding what has sometimes been said in a contrary sense. The archduke, however, hesitated, his wife not being very favorable to the idea, as if she had a premonition of the terrible end in store for both of these unfortunate and noble beings.

It will be remembered that the archduke married Charlotte, daughter of Leopold I, King of the Belgians, one of the wisest of modern sovereigns, both

the Emperor and the Empress always thought. Maximilian had a frank, open character and a very chivalrous nature. He charmed every one. The archduchess had also an agreeable personality, and both greatly fascinated the court of the Tuileries by their simple, kindly manners. Finally, the two young sovereigns left the banks of the Adriatic, at the foot of the Tyrolese mountains, where they had created a marvelous palace, and embarked for the new world. The thought of that departure still fills all with the deepest sorrow. It must be confessed though forebodings were felt at the time, one never dreamt that the gallant prince would not return and that the charming princess would come back only to lose her mind and be forever sequestered from the royal circles which she once so beautifully graced.

No sooner were the princely couple landed when troubles began. Juarez was keeping up a successful warfare which little by little told on the French army. General Bazaine, who, in the meantime, had become commander-in-chief, then altered his tactics. On October 3, 1865, he declared that no prisoners would be made, hoping to obtain by fear what he had not been able to obtain by ordinary means. This announcement made the name of Maximilian very unpopular and his position became more and more precarious. I have entered into this detail in order to give my absolute disapprobation of an accusation which has been brought against Bazaine. It has been insinuated in some quarters that Bazaine wished to render the new Mexican Emperor unpopular in order that he himself might profit thereby. He had married a Mexican, and it was held

that he nourished dreams of emulating Bernadotte. He was charged with having caused the war to drag on that there would be good reason for urging Maximilian to abandon the country. That there existed at this time in army circles in Mexico a certain distrust of Bazaine may be true, but neither the Emperor nor the Empress believed in these idle stories, either before or after the unfortunate Metz affair.

A prey to the greatest difficulties, the Emperor Maximilian now insisted on Empress Charlotte's return to Europe. This most devoted of wives, eager to share all the anxieties and dangers of her husband, stayed on in the new world as long as she possibly could. Finally, it was only by suggesting that she should make the journey in order to solicit the support of European powers and above all new and effective help of France, both in men and money, that the Emperor Maximilian succeeded in deciding his wife to embark.

It was in August, 1866, that Napoleon and Eugénie welcomed to Saint Cloud a guest who sought them under most striking, nay, almost tragic, circumstances.

Empress Charlotte had just reached Paris and, without taking any rest, asked an audience of Napoleon. Immediately the imperial carriages were sent to the hotel where she had alighted, and the Empress was brought to the Castle on August 11th, at two o'clock, in the afternoon. The guard then on duty showed her royal honors. She was in an open victoria and bowed graciously, I am told, as she passed the national flag at the gate.

The carriage stopped in front of the vestibule leading to the private apartments, where stood the

Emperor and the Empress ready to meet the guest, and together they mounted the staircase. After the usual presentations to the court ladies and gentlemen, all three went to the Empress's cabinet, where they remained alone for some time engaged in deep conversation, when, in a few rapid words, the object of her visit was laid before the Emperor.

Empress Charlotte was then only twenty-six years of age, tall, imposing and elegant, with an oval face which bore marks of great anxiety, fine, large brown eyes, and graceful features in every respect. She wore a long black silk dress, an elegant white hat, and was every inch a queen both physically, intellectually and in outward appearance.

A little later, during two hours the unhappy princess, with all the resolution and eloquence born of great misfortunes, gave the pitiful tale of trials and difficulties of all sorts against which Maximilian had struggled, a prey to the revolutionary agitations of the country, to open treason and to every possible opposition on the part of ambitious politicians, both native and foreign.

Gladly would Napoleon III have helped an ally whom he had so greatly assisted hitherto, who indeed owed his throne in great part to the French sovereign's timely and powerful support; but already clouds were gathering in France, and circumstances over which he had no control now forced him to do many things against his will. Nothing, indeed, grieved him more than the obligation he now felt under to utter the traditional "non possumus" and abandon his former ally. It was absolutely necessary that the Emperor refuse any further support to Maximilian, or to again interfere in Mexican af-

fairs. He repeated, therefore, that he could give no help, and, moreover, after trying to open the eyes of Empress Charlotte to the real situation, he urged her at all hazards, to induce her husband to give up such a desperate enterprise, such a forlorn hope and sail back to Europe. Such a response was not at all what the Princess had expected, for she was blinded by illusions. She had hoped that all could be arranged and she had decided to continue to hope on, always and in spite of everything. She begged the Emperor to think the matter over, and not thus to irrevocably abandon Maximilian's cause. She suggested all kinds of plans. One of these was to go even to Rome and beg the help of the Holy Father; another, to make a supreme effort with the Emperor of Austria, and a third, to urge the King of the Belgians to come to their aid.

When the poor Empress left, her weary face and fatigued features generally, told of the tears she had forced back. The Emperor and the Empress were most deeply moved, and both of them long retained a most bitter memory of the scene. The Emperor said at a later period: "On that occasion, owing to the refusal which I was forced to oppose to the poor princess's appeals, I could plainly see how cruelly hurt she was. We, too, were nearly crushed, I remember, by the sight of such anguish which nothing could appease." That night the Empress dreamed of the unhappy Charlotte, of the sad interview, and saw with her mind's eye Mexico and unfortunate Maximilian. But the terrible fate reserved for both of these noble beings was not then revealed to Eugénie.

When this distressing interview was ended, Empress Charlotte walked unassisted to her carriage,

apparently seeing nothing. She declined the hand of the aide-de-camp who wished to help her to the seat, and then, falling back on the cushions in such a despairing attitude, she even forgot, in her great sorrow, to salute the flag which bent over her from the castle wall. She quickly disappeared from Saint Cloud, and was never seen again by the Emperor or the Empress. We learn, however, that, shortly afterwards, the feverish agitation of the unfortunate princess became most marked, until she finally lost her reason without knowing aught of the drama of Queretaro. Confined in the castle of Bouchout, in the suburbs of Brussels, she has been unconsciously wearing her widow's weeds for years.

Neither the Empress Charlotte nor Maximilian in making their request bore in mind the changed conditions at this moment in the United States, as already touched upon in the earlier part of this chapter. In July, 1863, when the Mexican Empire was set up, civil war was raging between the North and South in the American Union; in July, 1866, when the Empress Charlotte sought the support of France, the conflict in the United States had ceased, with the victory of the North, the President had refused to recognize the Mexican Empire, General Grant and his veterans were eager to march to the support of the Mexicans, Secretary Seward in Washington and Minister Bigelow in Paris were invoking the Monroe Doctrine, and the French Government, now that the Confederacy had fallen, could not further incur the enmity of the American Union. Nor did French public opinion or the lowering clouds on the European horizon permit Napoleon III to continue further his unfortunate Mexican policy.

Though the Empress had at first favored this expedition she now joined with the Emperor in holding that it was a mistake and that it must be abandoned. "We have done our best by Maximilian," said the Emperor in as kindly a tone as he could command in bidding farewell to Charlotte, "but all we can do now is to help him to escape from his present danger."

Finally, matters got so bad in Mexico, that Napoleon desired Maximilian to abdicate, in order that a native Mexican might be made the head of a re-established republic. The Emperor was perfectly sincere in this change of attitude. This is proved by much of the preliminary conversation which was held with General Castelnau, who was sent to Mexico to try and persuade Maximilian to withdraw so that this plan could be carried out. But his mission was a failure, much to Napoleon's regret. The misled Emperor of Mexico, notwithstanding that the French troops left the country on February 5, 1867, decided, after some hesitation, to fight to the bitter end, with the tragic result that we all know. On May 15, 1867, Maximilian fell into his enemies' hands, and on June 19th, he was shot. The news of his horrible death reached Paris on the very day when the prizes of the international exhibition were being distributed at Paris, and it cast a gloom over the whole city.

CHAPTER V

THE POLISH QUESTION

Though the Empress made it a rule not to meddle in the foreign affairs of France, yet more than once she found herself, from one cause or another, drawn into matters of this kind, quite in spite of herself. In the first place, the Emperor often consulted the Empress, or at least talked over with her measures of state. He liked to see how an idea over which he had been pondering for a long time would strike an open mind which then and there heard it for the first time, and from the way that this idea appeared to that mind, the Emperor was frequently more influenced than most people—even those in the inner circle of the Court imagined. One of these questions, and one which puzzled him greatly during the first ten years of the Empire, was that of Poland. The Emperor was in the habit, not infrequently, of discussing it for hours on the stretch with the Empress alone or with both the Empress and Prince Napoleon together. The following chapter is based mainly on unpublished notes from various sources, and is expected to give an inside and court view of that complex and irritating problem which agitated Europe during such a long period and which stirred the sentiments of both worlds.

At the beginning of 1863, great disturbances were occasioned in Poland by the Russian government in-

augurating, without notice, a system of severe military conscription which really amounted almost to pro-scription. At Warsaw, the police, aided by soldiers, invaded the homes, seized the young men of an age to become soldiers and marched them off to the citadel. For political reasons, the government took for the army only the young men of the cities, whose turbulent patriotism was an embarrassment to the despotic rule of St. Petersburg, while the peasantry was suffered to go scot-free, the Polish peasants having accepted more or less willingly the foreign yoke. The official press of the capital dwelt on the ease with which the conscription had been accomplished; but the statement was not true, for these high-handed acts were, in fact, the signal for insurrection. The question now was whether this uprising could take root and become formidable. The rebels were armed with old-fashioned guns and pikes, and at first it was generally held that not much was to be feared from such a body of revolutionists. But little by little, public opinion in Europe saw that it was mistaken on this point, and that another formidable Polish insurrection had burst out.

The government of the Emperor Napoleon was painfully impressed by the sad event. Though the misfortunes of the Polish nation inspired compassion and pity, it was dangerous for the French cabinet to take sides. The Paris official world was careful not to criticize what was being done by the Russian authorities at Warsaw, the word "intervention," which was on many tongues both in Europe and America, was not pronounced at the Tuileries, and the French ambassador at St. Petersburg, the Duc de Montebello, was given strict instructions to

say and do nothing that could displease Russia. The party favorable to Russia, with the Duc de Morny at its head, did all in its power to prevent anything from troubling the cordial relations then existing between the two countries.

The legislative body devoted a sitting to the Polish agitation, on February 5, 1863, when Jules Favre took up the defense of the insurrectionists, and presented their cause in eloquent and violent terms. The government's orator was M. Billault, minister of the interior, and what he said were practically words put into his mouth by the Emperor himself. Here is the basis of the speech as drawn up by Napoleon: "The government is too sensible to pronounce futile words, which would nourish false hopes in the breasts of those moved by insurrectionary passions, and it is too jealous of its own dignity and that of France to suffer to be repeated in an official address, during fifteen years, words and promises which cannot be kept."

The reference in the last phrase is to the address of the French Chamber of Deputies in Louis Philippe's time, which for fifteen years, contained this pompous declaration: "The Polish nationality shall not perish." The phrase "insurrectionary passions," meant that alongside of those Poles who were struggling for the national idea, was another body who were making capital out of Poland's misfortunes to promote their own revolutionary ideas. "These are a danger," said the Emperor. The notes for the speech then continue as follows: "Polish sympathies have often served as a pretext for disorderly men to make trouble. It should be remembered that during the republic of 1848, the na-

tional assembly was invaded by a crowd shouting: 'Hurrah for Poland!' Times are much the same. Alongside of the true patriots are enemies of the social order, adepts of the 'cosmopolitan revolution,' 'internationalists,' always ready to act as promoters of disorder. For a long time Poland has been allowed to hope for help which could not be given, until she has finally ended by crying aloud: 'Heaven is too high and France too far away!' "

Referring to this Polish question in a conversation which took place at a much later time, Napoleon III said: "There existed in France at that moment two parties,—one favoring intervention of some kind, and the other demanding that the status quo be observed and that a prudent silence be maintained. I felt that if we did not wish to go to war,—and that we certainly did not wish to do,—we must be careful not to give encouragement to the Polish cause. The congress held in Paris, in 1856, did not take up the Polish question as it did the Italian one, which was another reason why it was difficult for France and the other powers friendly to Poland, to take it up at this time. At the interview with the Czar, at Stuttgart, in September, 1857, I did not openly champion the cause of Poland, though I did urge upon his Majesty the adoption of a kindly policy towards the Poles. In 1861, I approved the efforts at conciliation made at Warsaw by that liberal-minded Pole, the Marquis Wielopolski and by the Grand Duke Constantine. Above all things else, I desired at that time to maintain peace, and public opinion in France approved this policy. At that moment, there were no clouds on the political hori-

zon, and the relations between France and Russia were very friendly.

"But another power now strove to change the face of things and act its usual part of a dissolvent. The man who undertook to look after the destinies of Europe, narrowed down to the single interests of his own country, Bismarck, grasped the importance to Prussia of an alliance between that country and Russia, and as the occasion for bringing this about now seemed at hand, he eagerly grasped it. So at the moment when the recruiting practices instituted at Warsaw, were alienating from Russia the sympathies of all Europe, King William seized the opportunity to show his nephew, the Czar, marked and friendly attentions. General Gustave von Alvensleben was sent to St. Petersburg and, at the commencement of February, 1863, signed with Prince Gortschakoff, an agreement which eventually brought about a close intimacy between the two northern courts. Under the pretext of dealing only with Polish affairs, this arrangement really formulated a whole political system. The Berlin cabinet undertook to coöperate actively in the repression of the Polish insurrection, basing its action on the necessities of the protection of the customs of Russia and Prussia and on the demands of international commerce. Thus the troops of the two countries were to be permitted to cross each other's frontiers in the pursuit of rebels. Birmarck's real aim in this last matter was to prevent any trouble with Prussia's own Polish subjects. All agitation in the Grand Duchy of Posen was curbed by stringent measures and he could not understand why the same results might not be obtained in Russia by the employment

of the same methods. The Czar was inclined to generous and peaceable measures; but Prussia did all in her power—and it was very much—to check this disposition. The chief result of this Alvensleben agreement was to separate Russia and the Polish liberals.

"It should be remembered that at one moment at St. Petersburg there was a plan to the fore for making the Grand Duke Constantine king of Poland, of having the Grand Duchess don the Polish national costume and of reëstablishing the Polish constitution drawn up by Alexander I. These theories of Wieloposki approved more or less by the Grand Duke, Prince Gortschakoff and other influential persons, were entirely pushed aside by this Prussian agreement. Bismarck's policy triumphed and the Czar yielded to injunctions emanating from Berlin. Of course this laying hold of the home policy of Russia by Prussia caused not a little anxiety in Paris. The insurrection was local, so to speak, and it might have been kept so. But this intervention of Prussia —for intervention it was—reopened the 'Polish question.' It now entered upon a diplomatic phase. Through our ambassador at Berlin, Baron de Talleyrand, we made some 'observations' to the Berlin cabinet, and on February 21, we proposed to England and Austria the drawing up of a joint note protesting against Prussian interference in this matter. But those two powers refused to follow us on to that ground, and we stood alone in our protest. We were forced to act, and thus Prussia brought to the front once more this irritating question. Many on-lookers rejoiced at the situation of affairs, hoped that France would prevail and that much would be

done for Poland. But few seemed to realize that Prussia had but one object in view, viz.: to separate Russia from France.

"In France, the agitation in favor of Poland was very strong. Many French families were attached to Poland either by marriage or a common feeling of affection, and the public did not interest itself beyond measure in the government protest against Prussia's interference. The old sympathies of the time of Louis Philippe seemed to be awakening for 'the mourning nation.' The insurrection instead of 'being crushed in a week,' as sanguine Russian officials predicted would happen, spread and held in check formidable Russian armies. Frenchmen admired the bravery and patriotism of the struggling Poles. Paris society, the clergy, men of letters, republicans, catholics, legitimists, Orleanists, demagogues, everybody and all parties, in fact, seemed united in support of the Polish cause, no matter how much they were divided on everything else. A witty courtier ventured to remark to me one evening, when the question of the hour was under discussion,—'Why even the Empress and Prince Napoleon agree on this Polish matter!' But at the same time, the mass of the French people was for maintaining peace with Russia, and this fact was laid before the St. Petersburg cabinet; for the Tuileries was doing all in its power to steer a course that would avoid going to any extremes."

Petitions began to reach the French senate asking for intervention, and it was evident that a grand parliamentary debate was approaching. The Emperor saw here an excellent opportunity to set before Europe the real policy of the French government.

He had, on this subject, several conversations with Prince Napoleon as the Prince being a member of the senate might perhaps act as the mouth-piece of the Emperor on this occasion. But as Prince Napoleon had a very independent character, it was first necessary to know just what his views were on this all-important subject. So the Emperor asked the prince to give him some idea of what he proposed saying when the debate came up in the Senate. The following notes on that conversation were incorporated in somewhat the same form into the speech which was delivered at the Luxembourg palace a few days later.

"I shall probably open with words somewhat like this," began the Prince: " 'I see before me an honorable minister, who was a young and brilliant Pole (Count Walewski, minister of state); for it is not forgotten that in 1835 he was the envoy to London of the temporary Polish revolutionary government, after having nobly done his duty on the field of battle. Would he vote against our accepting those petitions in favor of his former native land? No; that would be impossible. And the generals and the other officers of the first Empire who have fought side by side with their brothers of Poland, will they vote against this motion? No, never. Will the prelates here present vote against their fellow catholics of Poland? It is hard to bring myself to believe it. Will the judges who are members of this body do so? Such a vote would be equivalent to declaring as not crimes all the horrors which are now being committed in Poland, in violation of every law and all that is right. Judges, therefore, could not follow such a course. In a word, I believe, and I believe

it from the bottom of my heart, that the French Empire with Napoleon III at its head, can and will take up the Polish cause. And why do I think the Polish patriots may expect aid from the Emperor? Because in 1831, two members of the temporary government addressed a pathetic letter to Prince Louis, who then resided at Arenenberg, in which they begged him to take the direction of the insurrectionary movement. He started forthwith but stopped at the frontier of Poland, when he heard of the sack of Warsaw. But we must make haste. Blood is being shed in torrents, and if you leave Poland to her own resources, she will be unable to fight much longer and will fall, a sacrifice to her enemies. I trust that the insurrection will last, and I hope it will be encouraged for the cause is a just one. Then, what is destined to happen will be accomplished; everybody's conscience will be clear and every man will have done his duty. I would have full confidence in the success of the cause, if the Emperor were to lift up his hand in defense of poor Poland.' ''

After listening to this outline of his proposed speech the Emperor informed Prince Napoleon that, though he felt just as he did on the subject, it would of course be impossible for the government to go to such lengths; so M. Billault, minister of State, was charged to represent the government in the approaching debate and the senate voted by a large majority for M. Billault's thesis. He spoke most kindly of the Polish nation, but was opposed to all exaggerated utterances. He recalled Poland's past and her unfortunate present, her grand part in history, the immense services which she had rendered to Christianity, and the glory and misfortunes

which the French and Polish armies had shared in common. He blamed those who advised extreme measures and advocated circumspection and reserve. "We do not want war with Russia," he exclaimed; "nobody wants that. But what we do want is a diplomatic agreement between France and the great powers; for this Polish question is a European question. This wise and sensible policy we oppose to a more dangerous method."

M. Billault let it be surmised that he spoke for the Emperor, which was quite true; for, every word he uttered had been weighed beforehand by the chief of state,—a custom which was much more common than many then supposed. Like the great Napoleon, Napoleon III took more direct part in the affairs of the state than he was ever given the credit for. One of the prominent characteristics of the man was modesty. Time and again he let others get the credit for some happy act, thought or speech of which he was really the author. What the Emperor cared most for was that the end in view should be attained. It was immaterial to him who aided in bringing this about. This highly developed trait lost him many honors and sometimes conferred undeserved honors on others. But he never complained, especially if it was he who lost the deserved honors. If this fact is always kept in mind in studying the Second Empire, it will explain many things which appear obscure, and will absolve Napoleon III from many short-comings, not to use a stronger word, which are sometimes laid at his door.

Many years after these events, the Emperor again talked freely on this same Polish crisis of 1863, and said, among other things: "The government did

not give up the hope of securing a joint action with the cabinets of Vienna and London, but its advisers were not agreed as to what might be the result of these negotiations. When the first feeling of indignation occasioned by the cruel treatment of Poland at this moment had passed away, careful observers in France, foreseeing the many difficulties and disappointments which were sure to arise, were in favor of France not breaking with Russia, but simply obtaining from her certain concessions which would be to her own interest as well as to that of Poland. But, said others, perhaps the Czar's government would not be disposed to listen to these demands and make any concessions. And still others asked whether it was not too late to hope to appease the effervescence which then prevailed in Poland, resulting from such oppressive measures. During the closing days of March, my position was a most embarrassing one. Up till then, I had tried to do nothing to weaken the Russian alliance. All we asked was formulated under the appearance of courteous entreaty. In the meantime, our foreign office was in active correspondence with the cabinet of Vienna, our purpose being to put ourselves in a stronger position in case the cabinet of St. Petersburg paid scant attention to our polite remonstrances. We know now, what was not so clear then, that Austria did not wish to be drawn into any complications with Russia. The important question was to know just how far Russia would be disposed to go in listening to our demands. M. Drouyn de Lhuys, our minister of foreign affairs, said to me one day about this time: 'The Russian government puts one's patience to a singular test.

When we expose, in general terms, the complaints Poland has to make, the St. Petersburg cabinet blames us for being too vague. When we speak with more precision, we are accused of interfering in affairs which do not concern us!'

"In the meantime, the insurrection was dragging on. The greater their trials, the more resolution and bolder courage were shown by the rebels. Their numbers grew, they became better disciplined, their obscure chiefs were growing famous from day to day. I was continually reminded of the Vendean struggle of the First French Revolution. Though the Russians were generally successful in the important fights, the rebels would disperse after such engagements to woods and bogs, reform and were soon ready for another encounter. The Russians attempted to form among the Polish peasantry who held back from the uprising a sort of 'rural guard,' whose duty it was to watch their suspected countrymen and arrest them if possible. The government encouraged delay; but all this had no effect in checking the progress of the revolt. Austria, England and France all urged Russia, through diplomatic channels, to do something to put an end to the insurrection and to prevent its recurrence. Most of the other powers joined us in these steps. But our joint action was of a purely diplomatic character. It did not have much practical result. There can be no question, however, that at first Prince Gortschakoff feared that this move was to be followed by some comminatory step. So he began to try and gain time. He let us know that he would not refuse to study the question in the general interest of Europe. He drew up dispatches which were master-

pieces of cleverness and replied evasively to our dispatches. In fact, he rather turned the tables on us by advising the powers to aid Russia in putting an end to the moral and material disorder which their course was tending to propagate in Europe. He congratulated Austria on having taken steps to protect herself on her frontier provinces against this Polish agitation and, in his reply to England, violently attacked the aspirations of 'the cosmopolitan revolutionary movement,' which really had its headquarters at London.

"In his dealing with me, the Prince was particularly clever. He let me know privately and in a round-about fashion that he considered me 'the only sovereign who was sincere in this matter and who was really in earnest about settling the Polish question.' After dwelling at some length on the 'cosmopolitan revolution,' the Russian chancellor went on to say that he considered it a little too much to ask Russia alone to put out a fire which was supplied from without with such an inexhaustible amount of inflammable matter, and he asked me to help Russia in her task, 'which solicitude for the welfare of the kingdom of Poland dictated, which also concerned Poland's duties towards Russia, and Russia's international relations with her neighbors and the powers in general.'

"These negotiations had raised the hopes of the Polish people, but had not in reality advanced the question of the pacification of Poland. I was told that I 'was trusted by the Polish people as I had been formerly by the Italian people.' They said they did not believe that France could desert them. But what could France do, generous and ever ready

to help oppressed nations though she was, if none of the other powers would do anything? Of course we could not go to war at that moment, when the general elections for the legislative body were approaching and when we were in the midst of the Mexican complications. At Vienna and London, still less than in Paris there was no thought of resorting to arms; so the diplomatic fencing continued. But Russia soon perceived that the combined action of the three powers was not going to accomplish anything. The Czar, who felt himself strongly supported by the Prussian king, saw that he had nothing much to fear. I was told on the best authority that the Czar had written the king: 'I know that I may count on you, as you may rely on me,' and we learned that in case war were to break out, the two sovereigns had promised each other mutual assistance. But what Russia feared above all was a naval demonstration; and when the Baltic was free from ice, she became still more anxious on this score. But at that moment, Lord Palmerston said in a public speech, what had been communicated to me a few days before, that 'Poland can rely on our sympathy, but not on our armed support,' and a little later, Lord John Russell said much the same thing. So when the prime minister and the minister of foreign affairs had spoken out so plainly, nothing substantial was to be expected from England. Thus the concerted action of the powers had become a myth. But M. Drouyn de Lhuys continued to negotiate, nevertheless, hoping to arrive at some result favorable to Poland, while the three powers proposed a conference at St. Petersburg. England went further and suggested an

armistice; but Austria declined to express an opinion on the matter. But finally the envoys of the three courts left for Russia in the first fortnight of June, agreed on all points.

"Throughout the negotiations, I remained faithful to my desire to support Polish claims to the very extreme limit permitted by a peace policy. On June 20th, we proposed to the cabinets of London and Vienna that our agreement be made more solid and workable by a convention or protocol, which should provide for our examining together what action we should take in case Russia should refuse to grant the measure necessary to reëstablish a stable and regular order of things in Poland. But both England and Austria rejected this proposal, and I soon after learned that 'the Czar was incensed with Napoleon for having put forward such a proposition and for fomenting against Russia a coalition and an eventual war!' The Czar did not forget this diplomatic episode, for I have every reason to believe that this was one of the causes why he showed so little sympathy for France at the moment of the war of 1870. So Prince Gortschakoff, seeing that neither England nor Austria would have anything to do with concerted action, felt himself master of the situation. He was now free to act boldly; so he cast off the mask, and on July 13th, replied to the three powers in three distinct dispatches, which amounted to an absolute disclaimer.

"In the dispatch sent to us, the prince said that 'one of the principal centers of agitation in favor of Poland is Paris.' There was of course truth in this assertion; but this fact had been long known and was not denied even by the French govern-

ment. He accused the Polish emigrants of having organized a vast conspiracy in that city 'with the purpose of misleading French public opinion, by a system of defamations and calumnies which has never been equaled, and of exciting disorder in the Kingdom of Poland, either by sending material aid or by the influence of an occult committee, and above all by spreading the belief that succor was coming from foreign parts. We trust that the French government will not suffer its name to be wrongly used in favor of the revolution in Poland and in Europe.' The prince closed his dispatch by refusing to grant any of the measures asked.

"Would Russia have given way before an armed demonstration? I think not, after the extent to which matters had been allowed to run. She knew quite well that Europe would not go beyond words, as the powers had their hands full already with other questions without starting up a new conflict, which nobody could see the end of. So, as common action could not be hoped for, France regretfully abandoned an affair which she could not pursue alone."

The Emperor and the Empress were greatly disappointed in this negative outcome, after so much negotiation and dispatch writing, and the devoted friends of the Empire were sorely grieved that the word of Napoleon had been unable to bring about a final settlement of this sad and wearisome Polish problem. The ultras of all the parties who favored Poland found fault with the Emperor, as if he had not done all in his power to aid the struggling patriots. The discontent was, therefore, general over this negative solution. And not the least misfortune

in connection with it was the estrangement which it produced between France and Russia, an estrangement which lasted, as has already been said, even up to the outbreak of the Franco-German war of 1870. When, four years later, the Czar of Russia visited the Empress in England, what regrets were felt on both sides. Alexander II was so much moved, that, for several long moments, he remained motionless at the entrance to the drawing-room at Camden Place without speaking a word, when he finally said: "I was mistaken, I was wrong!" referring to his attitude during the war of 1870.

CHAPTER VI

NAPOLEON ON FRENCH FOREIGN RELATIONS

As has already been shown in another part of these memoirs, the Emperor worked very hard during his imprisonment at Wilhelmshöhe. He made many notes at that time, some of which were in his own handwriting and some in the handwriting of others. Much of this material has never seen the light of day, and it is on these inedited materials that are based the pages which follow.

"The policy of the second empire," the Emperor said one day, "has been the target for violent attacks. We have been accused of lack of firmness and frankness. I have been represented as false and without any fixed principles, promising one thing to-day and doing another thing to-morrow; in a word, it has been held that I was actuated only by vulgar ambition. But, naturally, I do not think that this is a fair way to characterize the eighteen years of the second Empire. From the very start, in 1852, the aim of the Tuileries was to increase the prestige of France and secure a better general situation throughout Europe. So long as my authority was respected and strong, the country remained prosperous and calm, and external affairs gave no cause for alarm. During the existence of the moderate and prudent system, which our critics have called 'the personal government of the Emperor,'

France enjoyed peace and security. Disaster came only when the so-called parliamentary system was adopted and when responsibility centered in the ministers. Yet public censure has passed them over and laid all the blame for what has just happened on the head of the state.

"On mounting the throne, I found myself obliged, by the mere force of circumstances, to undertake a second time, but in a lesser degree, the mission of my uncle who explained in these words, at St. Helena, what he had accomplished: 'I cleansed the revolution, ennobled the people and strengthened the position of kings.' The thrones of Europe were again shaken by the French revolution of February, 1848, and my first duty was to consolidate them by reëstablishing order in France. Europe, and especially France, was agitated both by subversive passions and senseless theories, as well as by many much-needed reforms and legitimate aspirations. The first had to be suppressed or calmed, while the others called for a prompt and speedy realization. By seeking to retain all that was good in the revolution and by striving to improve both morally and materially all classes of society, I believed that all the various peoples would be raised to a higher degree of civilization. This was always my first aim; nor can an unprejudiced mind, I think, say that I was wholly unsuccessful in this effort.

"It was not necessary to have recourse to military glory in order to maintain my authority, nor to resort to tricks and questionable experiments to secure this same end. I gained my object by employing perfectly legitimate and usual methods, though some of my critics have said otherwise. At first,

my attention was entirely given to internal improvements. I hoped that foreign dissensions might be settled without a struggle and of course without a disaster like the one we have just now experienced, by the mutual agreement of the men who were at the head of the different governments. So my words pronounced at Bordeaux in the early days of the Empire: 'The Empire is a personification of peace,' were but the expression of a sincere and deep conviction. But circumstances were to cruelly destroy my illusions on this point. Thus, while I was engaged in studying with M. Bineau, minister of finance, the question of a proposed reduction of taxation, which should be chiefly favorable to the poorer class of citizens, the Eastern Question suddenly arose like a phantom in the midst of the roseate dreams of a government which had hoped to inaugurate an era of peace and plenty in France, the era of the 'poule au pot' of which Henry IV had fondly dreamed. So then it became necessary to put aside the matter of home reforms, in order to prepare for war. I felt it was my duty to maintain in the East, with the aid of two friendly nations, the traditional policy of France. It is not necessary for me at this late day to dwell on the causes and the results of the Crimean war, for all this is too well known. The one great and all-important consequence was the consolidation of the Franco-English alliance. The moderation shown by us after the victory quickly gained us the esteem and friendship of Russia, though a cloud was soon cast over our friendly relations with the Czar's government by the troublesome Polish question. I saw, too, that our warm relations with Eng-

land could not but awaken some coolness in Russia.

"I always remained faithful to the English alliance, though more than one political quidnunc urged me on several occasions to seize the opportunity when Great Britian was embarrassed to create difficulties for her and thus try to abase a rival power. But I think even my most captious critics will admit that I turned a deaf ear to these unwise counselors. During the Indian mutiny, the Civil war in America and the Trent affair arising therefrom, and at the time of the Abyssinian expedition, as in every other critical occasion, the cabinet of St. James felt no anxiety on my account. I was proud, at the time, of my course in this respect, and I have never had any regret for it since.

"Nor do I now regret what I did for Prussia in 1856, though that power has not since shown me any gratitude for what I then did. After the Crimean war, the belligerent powers alone, viz., Russia, England, France, Turkey and Piedmont, were invited to the congress of Paris. The king of Prussia felt extremely hurt at not having been asked to take a seat at that gathering which was to do so much in arranging the future map of Europe. The chief objection to Prussia came from England, which was much irritated by the conduct of the cabinet of Berlin, during the war; for Prussia had made no effort to conceal its sympathies for Russia. King Frederick William IV wrote me a letter full of discontent over Prussia's exclusion, which, he declared was an 'open insult.' He further expressed great confidence in my sense of justice and friendliness, and requested me to make an effort to overcome the objections of the cabinet of St. James. He even added: 'I would be

happy to owe my entrance to the congress to your good offices and I would consider it a personal favor for which I would feel undying gratitude.' I need not say that I was much touched by this appeal, and fully realizing the advantages to be derived from the participation of Prussia in these important European deliberations, I asked for the king's admittance, and of course my request was granted.

"This year of 1856 was one of the most glorious of the second empire. It was marked among other things, by this congress of Paris and by the birth of the prince imperial. The whole country was then in a state of perfect calm, which lasted unfortunately, only for a period of three years. Clouds suddenly began to gather over the Italian peninsula, causing much anxiety in Europe. The dissensions between Austria, which then held a large portion of Italy, and Piedmont, which aspired to become the ruling power there, were soon to bring about serious complications. I saw, as did all observing persons, that if Piedmont were vanquished, Austria would become mistress of all Italy and would spread her dominions right up to our frontiers. I therefore strongly favored the emancipation of Italy, and I raised my voice in the name of all those European nations which wished to secure their unity. We clearly stated, when war became inevitable, that we took up arms to free the peninsula 'from the Alps to the Adriatic,' a cry that awakened the enthusiasm of the whole Italian nation. In two months, Austria was driven beyond the Mincio. It then became necessary to sign a treaty of peace before my whole plan had been fully realized, which brought down on my head much undeserved censure. My critics in this mat-

ter forget, or pretend to forget, that England and Prussia were persistent on this point of an immediate cessation of hostilities, and the attitude of the latter power was even somewhat alarming.

"I was convinced that it would be unwise to turn a deaf ear to these English and Prussian desires, which were politely but rather firmly expressed; one of my best advisers truly exclaimed one morning: 'It is highly probable that, if we undertake the siege of Verona, we will have another war on our hands on the banks of the Rhine.' I did not hesitate, therefore, to put an end to hostilities and to make, myself, the first proposals for peace. Years have passed since then and I have often thought over all those events, and I must say that my course at that time still seems to me to have been the wise one. One of my confidential aides-de-camp, General Fleury, met the Emperor of Austria at Verona, and then and there began the preliminary negotiations which ended in the treaty of Villafranca. The General has left a note which has never been published and which reads: 'The Emperor Napoleon showed much determination in this crisis, and the Italians, naturally perhaps, were displeased thereby. But the French could not do otherwise than approve of his course, for it was not possible, or, at any rate, admissible, that the best interests of France be endangered for a foreign nation, however friendly might be our feelings for a people whom we wished to aid.' This strikes me as very fair, though at the time it was pronounced there were even some Frenchmen who differed with General Fleury, their better judgment, however, being warped by excessive hatred of me and the régime.

"But in spite of this brilliant campaign in Italy, none of the external questions, for some of which the war had been undertaken, were really settled. Even in Italy, Venice still remained under the Austrian yoke, while in Germany, Austria and Prussia were still left struggling for the hegemony of the Fatherland. The national unity idea was, however, advancing with gigantic strides, and in its name were being claimed all the inhabitants of the duchies of Holstein and Schleswig who belonged to the German race. Poland was becoming restless again and was soon to make another desperate effort to win her long-lost liberty, while a desire for freedom was also agitating the Balkans, and the Danubian principalities were appealing for help to the western powers. The state of Greece was alarming. But the most complex of all these questions was that of the Holy See and its temporal power, which caused much diversity of opinion everywhere. We have since seen what difficulties sprang from the transformation of Italy—how Piedmont encroached, little by little, not only on Tuscany, and the small duchies, but on the kingdom of the Two Sicilies; what political and religious troubles were caused by the spoilation of the States of Church; how the imperial government, with the warm approval of both myself and the Empress, defended to its utmost the interests of the Pope, and what deep animosity among catholics resulted from all these very serious matters.

"In view of all these discordant elements which were then agitating Europe, I proposed to the powers that they meet in a congress in order to settle by mutual consent all the questions which then threatened to disturb the world's peace if they were

much longer left unsolved. How I felt on the subject was stated publicly in my speech delivered at the opening of the legislative session of 1864, and repeated privately in various communications sent to the various foreign offices through different channels. These views may be summed up as follows: —Is it not most important to sanction by a new convention that which is irrevocably accomplished, and to settle by mutual consent that which is rendered necessary for the general peace? The treaties of 1815 no longer exist. They have been annulled or are being annulled everywhere by the force of circumstances. They have been torn in pieces in Greece, in Belgium, in France and on the Danube. Germany is restlessly seeking to alter them, England has generously modified them by the cession to Greece of the Ionian Islands and Russia is treading them under foot at Warsaw. It was partially known then and it is more fully known now how inhumanly Poland was then being harried by the St. Petersburg government. It is also understood now how great were the efforts made by me and my government to obtain gentler treatment for the suffering Poles, without provoking a war, which was, however, much desired at that moment by several political coteries in France, but which the Empress and myself, with the warm support of our best friends, succeeded in checking.

"In the midst of these successive rents in the fundamental European pact, I went on to say, violent passions are being awakened, and in the south as in the north, powerful interests demand a solution. Hence the unquestionable usefulness of the proposed congress. The prejudices and the quarrels

which separate us, I pointed out, have lasted too long already. The jealous rivalry of the great powers must not be a constant check to the progress of civilization. Must we continue to feed our mutual distrust by maintaining exaggerated armaments? I asked. Shall our most precious resources be indefinitely sunk in a vain ostentation of force? I held that we should no longer remain in a state which was neither that of peace with its security and prosperity, nor that of war with its lucky chances. We should cease to give undue importance to the subversive spirit of the extreme parties by opposing narrow interests to the legitimate aspirations of the national spirit which shows itself in certain quarters. In a word, I felt that we should have the courage to replace a weakly and precarious situation by a regular and stable one, even at the price of many sacrifices. Let us meet at the proposed congress, I urged, without any of us having drawn up beforehand fixed plan or program, without clinging to exclusive and ambitious desires. Let us, rather, be animated by the thought of establishing a new order of things founded henceforth on the true interests of sovereigns and peoples alike.

"I trust this appeal will be heard by all, I said in closing; for a refusal to accept my proposal would look as if some of the powers entertained plans which cannot bear the light of day. But I felt, as did the Empress, whom I often consulted in measures of this kind, that, even if my proposition did not receive, as proved to be the case, and so fell through, the unanimous approval of the powers, it nevertheless had the immense advantage of having warned Europe of the danger and of showing where

the remedy was to be found. 'Two ways are open to us,' I wrote to one of my ambassadors at this time; 'one leads to progress by means of a policy of conciliation and peace; the other, sooner or later, leads fatally to war, through this prevailing obstinacy in clinging to a crumbling past. But I suppose my idea appears at first blush, too utopian to many.' And I was right in this surmise. The powers proved rebellious to my proposition; they were even disdainful, which did not fail to please some of my French critics, who were often only too ready to abase France in order to strike at me and the régime. England was especially pronounced in her unwillingness to come into the proposed congress. But I could not at heart find fault with her course, for I knew that she always prefers to settle her own affairs alone, in the best way for her own interests. This she can generally do better than we can, because the cabinet of London finds, as a rule, a united country behind them when they take up foreign politics. But if England had seen her way in the early sixties to do what I wished, in this matter of a European congress, I think everybody will agree with me now that many disagreeable complications, which came about almost immediately afterwards, might have been avoided, to the advantage of Great Britain, France and several other powers.

"The death of the king of Denmark endangered the position of the duchies of the Elbe, and the spirit of Germanic nationality and unity was wrought up to so high a pitch that Austria, in order to save her position in Germany, was driven to join Prussia in a war against Denmark. England there-

upon urged France to unite with her in opposing this movement, which, in the end, was to affect the whole of Germany. But, notwithstanding our sympathy for Denmark, we replied that we felt that an energetic protest, such as the London cabinet proposed, would fatally bring on a war of which France would have to bear the brunt; for, if all England stood ready to do was to send her fleet and some troops to the Baltic, France ran the risk of having to fight on the banks of the Rhine against the united forces of Prussia and Austria. So I tried to induce the new king of Denmark to withdraw his proposed constitution and agree to some concessions which, to me and my advisers, seemed necessary. It was impossible not to see that Prussia desired to fight; and this fact could not be overlooked. The military party at Berlin was very powerful and clamored for war.

"I thought that some good work might be done both at the Danish and the Prussian capitals; so General Fleury was sent on another special mission. But he soon perceived that he could not accomplish much, as he found public opinion at Berlin very much attached to the principle of 'nationalities.' It was a principle I could not very well oppose on the banks of the Elbe when I had advocated it, sword in hand, on the banks of the Adige. Moreover, who would have imagined that a war, which was undertaken with the avowed object of freeing German subjects from the Danish yoke would end by placing Denmark under German tutelage? All of which, and much else, showed how wise it would have been if England and some of the other powers had backed up my idea of a general European Congress, that

would have settled this and certain other questions, which were not then burning ones, but which were rapidly approaching white heat.

"The agreement between Prussia and Austria over this Danish question did not last long and very soon their rivalry brought about a state of tension, the consequences of which were easy to foresee. In a word, as a certain statesman remarked to me one day, 'the robbers began to fall out.' Europe naturally became considerably alarmed at the antagonism of the two leading German powers. I proposed a conference whose aim was to prevent an explosion and to circumscribe our own action within the limits of the quarrel. But Austria refused to take part in such a conference and, consequently it did not take place. In June, 1866, I had a conversation on this subject with M. Drouyn de Lhuys, my minister of foreign affairs, in which I said:

"If this conference had taken place, your language was to be very plain, you remember. You were to say, as coming direct from me, that I had no thought of any territorial aggrandizement so long as the European equilibrium was not disturbed. We could not think of extending our frontiers, unless the map of Europe were modified to the exclusive benefit of one of the great powers, or unless provinces on our boundary expressed, through the ballot box, a desire to be annexed to France. Otherwise, I think it would be more worthy of the Empire and of greater benefit to the nation, to enjoy the precious advantage of living on good terms with our neighbors, and to respect their independence and their spirit of nationality, rather than to acquire, at their expense, any increase of territory. You

know that I appealed to England and Russia to unite with us in addressing words of conciliation to all the interested parties. But in vain. However the agreement between the neutral powers is itself a guarantee of security for Europe. They showed a markedly impartial spirit when they agreed to restrict the discussions of the proposed conference to the pending questions. I thought these should be frankly examined, freed from the diplomatic veil which covered them, and that due consideration should be given to the legitimate desires of certain sovereigns and peoples.

"The conflict which has arisen is due to three causes, viz., the badly defined geographical situation of Prussia, the longing of Germany for a new constitution better suited to her general needs, and the desire of Italy for national unity. If it is held that neutral powers are not to intervene in the internal affairs of foreign countries, it does not follow that nations which took part in the formation of the Germanic confederation have not the right to decide whether the changes in that organization now called for are or are not of a nature to compromise the peace of Europe. It is desirable that the secondary states of the confederation should be more closely united, should have more power and play a more important part in the public affairs of Germany; that Prussia should have greater homogeneity and strength in the north; and that Austria should maintain the strong position which she held in the Empire.

"I believe—to touch on another subject—that, for a fair compensation, Austria might be induced to hand Venice over to Italy; for as, in accord with

Prussia, she is attacking Denmark, quite regardless of the treaty of 1852, in the name of German nationality, she should be consistent and recognize the same principle in Italy and so complete the independence of the peninsula.

"But for the moment, it is the fate of arms which will determine what will be the attitude of France in the present unpleasant imbroglio. Some may ask whether we should show displeasure because Germany finds the treaties of 1815 powerless to satisfy her national tendencies and to maintain order. I, personally, do not think we should take this position, and it is this aspect of the question, that is, my own point of view, which I should like to see our foreign office push to the front. It appears to me that in the contest about to begin, only two things interest us—in the first place, that the European equilibrium be preserved, and in the second place, that we aid in the complete realization of that which we have helped to establish in Italy.

"The question now arises whether our moral strength will suffice to safeguard these two desiderata, or whether we shall be forced to draw the sword in order to obtain a hearing. I do not think that we will be driven to this sad extreme, and, in fact, it should be your constant effort to render this impossible. If in spite of all we can do, peace cannot be maintained between those who are about to plunge into war, I am, nevertheless, assured by these two powers that, whatever may be the outcome of it, none of the questions which interest us will be decided without the assent of France. That, it seems to me, is an essential point. It is, consequently, our duty to remain neutral, though we should be well on

our guard, sincere in our disinterestedness, and ever filled with the lofty desire to see the nations of Europe forget their quarrels, small and great, and unite in the cause of civilization, liberty and progress. Let us, in a word, be firm; strong in the knowledge that we are in the right, and aware of our force, continue perfectly calm, though the tempests roar about us."

This conversation served as the basis of an official letter to the minister of foreign affairs, which was made public with a purpose, a few days later. Of course, the letter could not be worded, in some places, quite so strongly as was the conversation, and for this reason it is of some historical value to give the exact views which the Emperor and the government held at this time on all these important questions, some of which soon became burning ones.

"As everybody now knows," the Emperor's notes continue, "diplomacy could not arrest the conflict which threatened the center of Europe and France remained to the end of the trouble in an expectant attitude, ready to urge, at the proper time, the observance of justice and moderation. I am of course speaking here of the Austro-Prussian war, which sprang from the Austro-Prussian conflict with Denmark. At the very start, Prussia realized that she could not enter upon that great struggle without either the assistance or the neutrality of France. She could not call down upon her frontiers both the French and the Austrian armies. So the king of Prussia instructed his representative at Paris, Count von Goltz, to learn what were my intentions and wishes. We naturally had frequent conversations on the subject. The king even sent me an autograph

letter begging me to come to an understanding with his ambassador on the important question. I answered the king that it was hard for me to foresee what might be the results of the approaching struggle, but that the two sovereigns must repose mutual trust in one another and in their desire to maintain friendly relations, whatever should happen. The negotiations were not concluded, however, so rapidly did matters move, though the declaration of neutrality on the part of France satisfied Prussia; for that was the thing that concerned her most. Austria did not make the same advances. Under the circumstances I might have hesitated to respond to the Prussian demand; but I did not do so. My action was very favorable to Prussia, and made it possible for her to promptly open the campaign. Berlin had complete trust in our friendship,—to such a degree that Count Bismarck was able to say to my ambassador at Berlin, Count Benedetti: 'Our confidence in your government is so absolute that we are not leaving a single soldier on the left bank of the Rhine.'

"The rapid triumph of Prussia astonished the world and made a deep impression in France. It was not thought that Prussia would win so easily; quite the contrary. It was felt generally that Austria would conquer and would even have to be restrained, in the moment of victory, by the neutral powers. But it turned out that it was Prussia that had to be held back! The organs of our government said rightly that thanks to our spirit of moderation and to our influence, a victorious army had been stopped at the very gates of Vienna and the integrity of Austrian territory preserved, while the

independence of the smaller states of southern Germany had been maintained and certain concessions obtained for Denmark. But all the clauses of the treaty of Prague did not satisfy French public opinion. A very bellicose party had arisen at home which went so far as to urge me to declare war against Prussia, while the armed forces of that nation were still occupied on the Danube. Some of my confidential advisers thought that the very least we could do was to make an armed demonstration on the Rhine. Marshal Randon, then minister of war, has been blamed for having exclaimed at this crisis that 'all the available troops are busy in Mexico.' But the truth is he never made any such remark. Another truth is that several of my ministers were hostile to Austria and did not see the danger of Prussian aggrandizement. So they held that the status quo should be maintained, lest any other policy should lead to another war in which France would be one of the principal actors. The Empress was very much inclined to favor Austria and as the war went on, all her private wishes were for the success of that country. But, as usual, she did not feel justified to use her influence in this direction. As I had made a promise, I intended to keep it. I refused to follow the advice of Frederick the Great, given in his memoirs, to the effect that a sovereign is not bound to keep his word, like an ordinary mortal when it conflicts with the interests of his people. I, however, in this instance felt that my policy was the wisest that could then be followed and I did all I could to correct what I considered the mistaken policy of the public and some of my circle. I see now that I was mistaken. I had then

two trump cards to play and, I am ready to confess, I threw down the wrong one.

"For the time being, it was necessary to reply to the deputies and the organs of the opposition who represented the government as having shown itself weak and pusillanimous, declaring that it had not dared to support and defend by armed force the true interests of France. These were pretty grave charges which we did not think ought to go unanswered, especially as it was so easy to show that they were perfectly false. I replied that it was not through weakness but from conviction that I had aided in the reconstitution of great nations in Europe and I proudly declared that my thoughts and actions would have been approved by the great man who, from the height of his solitary island rock, had dictated such magnificent instructions to serve as guides to his successors. In private conversations at this time, and later, at the opening of the parliamentary session of 1867, I quoted these words of Napoleon I at St. Helena: 'One of my chief aims has been to bring about the agglomeration and concentration of the same geographically related peoples, whom politics and revolutions have separated or broken up into bits. This agglomeration will occur sooner or later, by the mere force of circumstances. The impulsion has been given, and I do not think that after my fall and the disappearance of my system, there will remain any other possible equilibrium in Europe, except that of the agglomeration of the great nations. The transformations now going on in Italy and Germany all point in the direction of the realization of this grand plan of the

ultimate union of European states in a single confederation.

"But, notwithstanding all our efforts, we could not silence the unconvinced and tenacious opposition both inside and outside of the legislative body. The government was blamed, in some quarters, for not having been the first to begin the war; we were told that our only policy had been simply to accept accomplished facts, and we were informed that, because of our short-comings, an irreparable blow had been dealt to the prestige of France. Desirous of replying to these fresh attacks, I had several long conversations with the Marquis de La Valette, foreign minister ad interim. Among other things, I said to him: 'This war in the center of Europe has destroyed the old Germanic confederation and finally brought about the unity of Italy. Prussia, whose boundaries have been enlarged by this victory, now governs on the right bank of the Main. Austria has lost Venice and has separated from Germany. On account of these very considerable changes, every state is silently watchful, conscious of the position of responsibility in which it has been placed by these events, and wondering what will be the effect of the recently signed peace, what will be its influence on European order and on the international situation of each power. In France, public opinion is on the alert. It wavers, uncertain, between joy at seeing the destruction of the treaties of 1815 and fear lest the power of Prussia become too formidable; between the desire to see peace maintained and the hope of obtaining through war an increase of territory. It rejoices over the complete enfranchisement of Italy, but is anxious concerning the dangers which seem to

threaten the Holy Father. The government should speak out frankly on this point. In a general way, France cannot at present adopt an equivocal policy. If the important changes now under way in Germany strike at her interests and threaten her strength, she should squarely face the fact and take every step necessary to assure her safety. If on the contrary, she loses nothing by these changes, she should honestly admit it, and do all in her power to quiet exaggerated apprehensions, and refrain from extravagant criticisms of men and things at home and abroad, which, by arousing international jealousy and suspicion, tend to draw the country from the path she has chosen to follow.' Such were the ideas which I developed in the conversations which I had with our foreign office and which were finally embodied, substantially in this same form, in a confidential circular sent to all our diplomatic agents stationed abroad.

"In further conversations with this same official, I developed other ideas which were not, I believe, inserted in this circular, but the notes of which still exist and which make it possible to give these further views. They clearly show what were my ideas at that time on several other points. I said that, after 1815, the Holy Alliance united against France all the nations from the Ural to the Rhine. The German confederation then had eighty millions of inhabitants, with Austria and Prussia at its head. It spread from the Duchy of Luxembourg to Triest, from the Baltic to Trent and surrounded us with a band of iron which was supported by five federal fortresses. Our naturally strong strategic position was checked by the cleverest territorial combina-

tions. At the slightest misunderstanding, all the forces of the confederation might rise against us. Austrian Germany firmly established on the Adige, could quickly advance on us if necessary, right up to the Alps, while Prussian Germany had as a vanguard on the Rhine all these secondary states which were ceaselessly agitated by longings for political transformation and which were taught to consider France as the enemy of their national aspirations and a source of danger to their very existence. If I except Spain, it was then impossible for us to contract an alliance with any nation on the continent. Italy was cut up into bits and was powerless, so that she did not count as a nation. Prussia was not compact enough nor independent enough to depart from her traditional course, while Austria was too much occupied in holding on to her Italian possessions to have the time or the inclination to think of entering into an arrangement of any kind with us. The long continuation of peace has led us to forget the dangers of these territorial organizations and alliances, for their formidableness could come out only in case of war. But everybody knows that more than once France has obtained a precarious security only at the cost of turning her back on the rôle which she really ought to play in the world. It cannot be denied that for nearly forty years she has found up and ready before her the three great nations of the north, united as one man by the recollection of past common defeats and victories, by similar forms of government, by solemn treaties and by a sentiment of mistrust in our liberal political system and our desire for a more progressive civilization.

"But what do we find to-day? The coalition of the

north is broken. The Europe of to-day is governed by the principle of freedom in the making of alliances. All the great nations are now independent and are working out untrammeled their own destinies. Prussia, enlarged and free from all embarrassing connections with the other German states, ensures the independence of the German Fatherland. France should not feel any resentment on this account. Satisfied with her own admirable unity, with her well-knit nationality, it would not be good form for France to take umbrage at this great act of assimilation which has just been accomplished on the other side of the Rhine and to show jealousy over this excellent example of the principle of nationalities which she represents and which she has always advocated in her relations with the other peoples. Now that Germany has attained this long-wished for unity, her anxiety is ended and the old feeling of enmity towards our country must fade away. By imitating France in this respect, she has taken a step which must draw her nearer to us and not separate her still further from us, as some fear. I believe in the honest friendship of Germany.

"The same thing is true of Italy, whose long servitude has not succeeded in extinguishing her patriotism. She, too, now enjoys all the elements of national greatness, and this fact profoundly modifies the political conditions of Europe. In spite of unreflecting susceptibilities or passing injustice which sometimes show themselves there, her ideas, her principles, her interests draw her nearer to the nation whose blood has been shed to help her conquer her independence.

"As for Austria, freed as she now is from all

anxiety in the direction of Italy and of Germany, no longer wasting her strength in sterile rivalry, but concentrating it in the east of Europe, she counts thirty-five million of souls, whom no hostile feeling, no interests of any kind, separate from France."

The following paragraphs, written before 1870 and selected from various notes left by the Emperor, bear on the same topics considered above and strengthen the views there stated.

"How comes it that old ideas, reacting on the present, cause some Frenchmen to see not allies but enemies of France in those nations which are now freed from a past which was hostile to us, and are now enjoying a new life, governed by principles which are ours and animated by sentiments of progress which characterize modern society? A more firmly constituted Europe, rendered more homogeneous by better territorial divisions, is a guarantee for the peace of the continent, and can in no way be a danger of any sort to our country, as some of our critics would have us believe. France, with Algeria, will soon number 40 millions of inhabitants; Germany has 37 millions, of which 29 are in the confederation of the north and 8 in the confederation of the south; while Austria has 35, Italy 26 and Spain 18. What is there to trouble us in such a distribution of the population of Europe? This irresistible power which leads nations to join in great agglomerations, causing secondary states to disappear, is a tendency which arises out of a desire to obtain more efficacious guarantees for general interests. Perhaps it springs from a sort of prevision on the part of Providence as to the destinies of the world. Russia and the states of Europe which enjoy na-

tional unity, will soon count a population of some 100 millions of souls. While approving of this progress on their part, it is only prudent that the nations of central Europe should not remain morselled up into so many different states, lacking in strength and public spirit.

"I would lift politics above the narrow and mean ideals of another age. I do not think that the greatness of a country depends on the weakness of the countries surrounding it. A true equilibrium rests on the satisfied convictions of all the nations of Europe. In holding this view, I express old convictions of mine and simply restate the traditional policy of the Imperial family. Napoleon I foresaw the changes now occurring in the map of Europe. He himself sowed the seeds of new nationalities, by creating the kingdom of Italy in the peninsula, and by blotting out some two hundred and fifty independent little states in Germany. Thus did the great Emperor play the part which he had proudly adopted of mediator, a rôle which was not without glory, for it put a stop to useless effusion of blood, moderated by his friendly intervention the ardor of the conqueror, attenuated the consequences of defeat, and, in the midst of many obstacles, often secured peace. I would have sadly mistaken my part in recent events if I had violated my promised neutrality and plunged France suddenly into an uncertain and tremendous war, one of those fearful struggles based on race hatred, in which the whole population rises as one man to destroy a rival that also represents a just as firmly united people.

"Later on in this same year of 1867, I again, both on private and public occasions, expressed these

same opinions, speaking out still more precisely in regard to Prussia. 'In spite of the declarations of the government,' I remarked in one instance, 'which has never wavered in its pacific attitude, the belief has spread that any modification in the internal organization of Germany must be a cause of trouble between France and Prussia. A stop should be put to these falsehoods, France is ready to frankly accept the changes which have been brought about on the other side of the Rhine, and declare that, so long as our interests and dignity are not menaced, we will not interfere in this transformation which is going on in accordance with the expressed wishes of the peoples of the German states.' This was right to the point, and could leave no doubt as to what my own views were on this very important question; and I may add that my way of looking at the matter was shared by more than one thoughtful person in my circle, some of whom, however, turned coat at a later period." (These last lines seem to have been added after the Franco-German war.)

The two excerpts which follow, if written before 1870, were evidently revised after that date.

"The same critics who would have warmly blamed me if I had commenced hostilities at this time,—I of course refer to the moment of the Prusso-Austrian conflict—expressed much displeasure over the evolution which I have mentioned among continental states. In a word, they would have blamed me if I had gone to war and they now blame me because I didn't go to war! Subsequent events have shown that it would have been better for France if Prussia's growth could have been checked. Of course I see this now. But could this growth have been

checked even if I had abandoned the policy of moderation and prudence which I had adopted? It is at least problematical. M. Thiers was one of these inconsequential critics of me and my course. His views on this head were best set forth in a speech which he delivered in March, 1867, before the legislative body. In that speech, which was widely read both at home and abroad, this caustic adversary of the Second Empire declared that the victory of Königgratz was the most fatal blow struck at the influence of France since the dark days of the invasion of 1814; that her greatness was incompatible with the existence of other grand states established on her frontiers; that, after having committed the mistake of aiding in the creation of a united nation of 23 millions beyond the Alps, the still graver error had been made of 'allowing Prussia to so develop in strength and territory that the Germanic Confederation was one of the best political combinations in Europe'; and, finally, that there would be reason to regret this when France would be forced to set troops on foot to defend the autonomy of the smaller German states which Prussia was determined to make her satellites. The entire house cheered this speech. But it is always an easy thing to point out pretended shortcomings in a policy of moderation. Such criticisms, however, do not come with good grace from men like Thiers, who, when the recent war—that of 1870—was imminent, did all they could to prevent us from properly reorganizing the French army. If they were so opposed to our fighting in 1870, would they not have been still more so in 1866? I think there can be no doubt of this, and

hence it is that I do not feel that what they say about us should be taken very seriously.

"Another of this same class of statesmen, M. Jules Favre, went still further than M. Thiers, for he declared publicly that 'it was not only in 1866 that we should have opposed Prussia's ambition, but it was above all against Prussia and Austria jointly that we should have moved, when, together, they attacked Denmark.' In other words, this gentleman held that France should have measured forces with two of the greatest military powers of central Europe! And later, he blamed us, for not 'enforcing the carrying out of the treaty of Prague.' Of course this sort of rhetoric is rather empty talk, especially when it is remembered that these two deputies always had in view an attack on the government, which right or wrong, was to be opposed. This is called 'good politics'; but it is not always good patriotism."

At a later period than the one when these words were originally penned by the Emperor, he remarked, referring to these same two statesmen and to this same subject: "Thiers and Favre, after the fall of the Second Empire, praised themselves for their constant pacific attitude as reflected in their speeches made at the moment of the breaking out of the war of 1870. It was very convenient for them to forget these earlier declarations. The fact is that M. Thiers was continually harping, before 1870, on the inevitability of war with Prussia, the only question in his mind being whether it was opportune or not and when was the right time to begin it. I do not think that we can too severely blame a course which consisted in ever declaring to the country that it had been abased, that the battle of Sadowa was a second

Waterloo and that it could not hope to rise again in the eyes of the world. M. Thiers and M. Jules Favre led in perpetual harangues whose burden was that Prussia was a constant danger on our Rhenish frontier. It was showing a greater ignorance of the French temperament than these gentlmen could have possessed to be ever seeking to excite the nation to a paroxysm of indignant patriotism and folly and then to turn around and ask this same nation to restrain her indignation and her armed strength. Or was this simply playing an opposition game without observing the simplest rules of prudence or the plainest demands of political honesty?"

I may add that criticism of a somewhat similar nature was also indulged in by some of the leading writers of the daily press and of books. They are fairly represented by the opinions of that well known publicist, Prévost Paradol who spoke as follows to one of the court circle and who put much the same words into one of his best known books, issued at about this time: "The more one reflects on it, the more one is convinced that a love of peace, philosophical politics, the first will of the government, and the like, cannot prevent a shock between growing Prussia and France, hemmed in by her old boundaries and deprived of all hope of increasing her population or her territory. This relative decrease is too strong a trial for our political and military pride. As, however, things in this world are fertile in surprises and as the best founded expectations are sometimes found to be false it is not absolutely impossible that peace be maintained. It is sad to have to say so, but truth and common sense compel me to speak what I think—I feel that the

consequences of a policy of inaction would be about as bad for us in the end as a regular defeat on the field of battle, the only difference being that in the former case more time would be required for the consequences to show themselves, and though the form in which the bitter pill would be presented would be less bitter, perhaps, the principle involved would be the same. Is an invasion necessary to make us disappear from the scene and fall into moral dependence on the foreigner? I do not think so. Has the Portugal of to-day been invaded? Did we have to invade it when we had a quarrel with the Lisbon government over a French ship which they had refused to hand over to us? Why, all we had to do was to cut the cables which held the craft in the Tagus, and she was brought back to us without our having to fire a shot. Is the Emperor disposed, at the slightest difference with the new arbiters of Europe, to submit to treatment of this kind at the mouth of the Seine? I hope not."

M. Prévost Paradol then summed up the whole contention in these words: "France must suffer herself to become a second-rate power, or she must fight!"

The Emperor comments as follows on this book of M. Prévost Paradol: "Such statements coming from such an able source caused the policy of the government to be badly viewed by the general public and made me feel more and more as though some great effort should be tried to modify the situation. So we began to look about to see what could be done to mollify the ill-will of the opposition and to satisfy, at the same time, the demands of French opinion. I considered that some act on the part of Prussia

which would show that her aggrandizement had not been accomplished with any unfriendly feeling towards France, some movement which would tend to increase the friendly relations between the two countries, would be a happy event that would render peace sure for a long time to come. It seemed to me that the annexation to France of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg would soothe the growing agitation in our country and lead the way to a real conciliation. I knew that the Duchy was quite willing to become French, and thus aid in putting an end to the general uneasiness then prevailing. My view was shared by others, even on the further side of the Rhine. I have seen a letter written in 1871, by a certain German of high rank in the learned world, in which occurs this passage: 'One of your fellow countrymen, who has a harder feeling for France than I like to see in a gallant gentleman, told me back in the sixties that Germany was under great obligations to France for the important, though negative, share which the latter took in the unification of the former. But, under the influence of a sort of pride, which produced unfortunate consequences in the years which followed, Berlin did not see, in the same light as the Emperor, this matter of the Duchy of Luxembourg. But increase of territory is really of small importance to a nation which already counts from 30 to 40 million souls. Thus, the acquisition of Savoy and Nice did France more harm than good, because of the feelings of resentment which this annexation caused in certain quarters of Italy. It is to be regretted, however, that the Prussian government did not see its way to permit the uniting of Luxembourg to France at this time, when the Em-

peror wished to bring it about. If it had been done, France would not have been any stronger nor Germany any weaker; and this insignificant concession would have sufficed to satisfy the popular demand in France. It is well to consider a popular demand in a country where universal suffrage exists and the people's voice can make itself felt at the polls and thus affect the conditions of the government. It would have enabled the Emperor to cover his retreat in a graceful manner. I have ground for believing that Count Bismarck saw the full effect of this act and was disposed to consent to it, but certain circumstances beyond his own control upset his plans.'

"Even the most clever statesmen cannot always do what they would like to do, though, in this instance, it was most unfortunate that such was the case. This Luxembourg question which was to serve as a bond of union between France and Germany, to dissipate unfounded suspicions and put a period to many silly jealousies, became, on the contrary, a new cause of irritation and a fresh element of conflict. From this moment, all was changed. The link which was to hold the two nations more closely together suddenly snapped in my hands, and henceforth my opponents had an easy game to play. 'There,' they cried, 'is the fruit of your condescension towards Prussia. You have helped her to secure her national unity and to annex the best part of Germany, and when you desire to add to our territory an insignificant province whose population is French, both in sentiment and material interests you encounter at Berlin only ill-temper or something worse.' And of course this statement was only too true. That I was sorely disappointed at the turn

which this affair took goes without saying. I saw that my German policy had received a blow which it would be very hard to parry. M. Thiers was triumphant, and now it became much harder, almost impossible to show that his sinister predictions had been unjust and unfounded.

"Foreign affairs always have a strong influence on home matters. A government may do all in its power to help industry and commerce, to protect agricultural interests, to improve public instruction, to promote the development of the arts, sciences and literature—and the Second Empire surpassed perhaps every other previous régime in France in these respects—but if the country feels that the national flag no longer waves high and firm, a sort of general uneasiness paralyzes every effort looking to the prosperity of the land. Even the most cursory glance at French history at the beginning of this century shows that the fall of the Bourbons was due to no other cause than this. The Opposition during the Second Empire was well aware of this principle and was clever to make the most of it. They lived, politically, on the fears of the people. Their party cry was that we were not defending as we should the best interests of France abroad, and by harping continually on this theme, they kept the nation in an unsettled and feverish state.

"With this fact in mind, I sketched out for the foreign office, on one occasion at about this time, certain statements which might be embodied into some sort of an official reply to these persistent attacks. I take the following lines from rough notes now in my possession. They run about as follows: 'Many people allege that the unfortunate war of

which we are enduring the hardships is the result of the culpable imprudence on our part which suffered Prussia to increase her power.' But one should not always judge things by what they are but by what they might have been. It is quite true that since her victory at Königgratz, the strength of Prussia has been greatly increased, and that now, with her own forces joined to those of southern Germany, we are outnumbered. But let us suppose that we had gone to war with Prussia before 1866, what would have been the position of France, keeping in mind the treaties which then bound all the members of the German confederation? We should have had to fight not only against the armies of Prussia and the south of Germany, but also against those of Austria as well. The idea seems to prevail in France that the Germanic confederation was one of those political machines, so complicated that it is hard to move it. That is true in so far as concerns home affairs, but the confederation presented a flexibility in foreign military affairs that enabled it to meet an enemy with a very strong front. If during our war against Austria in 1859 a French battalion had put foot on territory belonging to the German confederation, such as the Tyrol for instance, the whole vast country from the Alps to the Baltic would have risen in arms. It should be remembered, too, that prior to 1866, there was no possibility of our making an important alliance with the center of Europe. Then Austria was firmly bound to Germany and Italy did not exist as a power!"

At a later date, the Emperor said in this same connection: "It has been stated that in 1870, we stood alone without allies. This is only too true.

But the reconstitution of Europe since 1866 made it possible for us to hope that we might have some. No treaty then prevented the Austro-Hungarian empire from joining with us, and unified Italy might also have come to our assistance. If this had hapened, my policy would have triumphed notwithstanding the growth of Prussia, for there still remained a sufficient counter-weight to her power. We might have had with us in 1870, 400,000 Italians and 700,000 Austro-Hungarians. Before 1866, on the contrary, there was no good ground for our expecting to find any support in central Europe. These are the facts which the Opposition of then and now have so mixed up that public opinion has lost sight of the real truth."

Again, speaking at an earlier date, the same line of thought was developed as follows: "After 1867, there was much unrest in the French public mind. Although it was a time of peace, our relations with foreign powers caused much anxiety at home. My intentions were misrepresented, a storm of mistrust was blowing, and the prestige of the empire was unquestionably weakened. I seized this moment to increase the powers of the legislative body so as to give to the direct representatives of the nation a larger share in the responsibilities of the state. By a graduated series of concessions, our imperial government became a purely constitutional government, certainly the most liberal that had ever existed in France up to that time. The deputies were chosen by universal suffrage; the legislative body was granted the widest powers; the senate was transformed in a broader sense; the cabinet ministers were made responsible for their acts; the press was

given large liberties, and the right of holding public meetings was made more general. Such was the imperial system as it stood before the war of 1870," added the Emperor somewhat later. "From that day, the nation, in possession of rights and liberties until then unknown, whatever our critics may say to the contrary, was not to become mistress of her own destinies. But the question we were all asking ourselves at the Tuileries was what use she would make of these opportunities? The country as a whole desired peace. The chambers, the government and the Empress and myself, all desired peace. And yet, because of the state of tension in which the country and Europe in general found themselves, war was to come, a war which had not been sought by us, though the Empress has been shamefully accused of desiring it, a war which had been counted on in Germany—there can be no honest questioning of this assertion, any longer—a war which we were forced to accept.

"In taking over the ministry under the new régime, M. Emile Ollivier, a former republican who had become imperialist through conviction that the constitutional system about to be inaugurated would be a blessing to much-troubled France, a very sincere man, wholly devoted to the causes which he had always defended and advocated, a man of great moral bravery, who has been reviled unjustly by friend and foe,—M. Emile Ollivier accepted the very difficult and delicate task which I had charged him with and promptly laid before me his proposed program. He warmly accepted the principle of 'nationalities,' admitted that Germany had a perfect right to form the sort of union that she thought best,

and wound up his state paper with a frank and honest profession of pacific intentions. This declaration was followed up shortly afterwards by my minister of foreign affairs, Count Daru who approached the Berlin cabinet, through the mediumship of England, with a proposal of disarmament. In order to prove to the Prussian government that we were acting in perfect good faith, we presented to the legislative body a bill cutting down the military contingent of each year some ten thousand men. The bill was voted. As the majority of the body had all along been opposed to an increase of our military establishment, it was not difficult to secure this approval of our policy, and this decrease was, in fact, the corollary of the proposal for disarmament. One could not be done without the other. So this joint action of both the crown and the legislative branch of the government should have greatly strengthened our proposition at Berlin. But the fact is that the Prussian government received our suggestion coldly and evasively, and the matter was finally dropped. This action was significant. But at the beginning of 1870, everything still pointed in the direction of peace.

"Our aim now was to develop the moral and material resources of the country, aided, as we hoped would be the case, by this new liberal form of government. A certain anxiety, however, prevailed throughout the nation. The Opposition, though refusing to grant further appropriations for the army, was constantly complaining in the tribune and in the press of the increase of the Prussian forces. The policy of accusing the government of betraying the true interests of France by showing too much

moderation and patience with Germany was having its natural effect on the other side of the Rhine. Germany was arming. The fiery speeches in the legislative body not only agitated the country in general and produced at Berlin, the result just noted, but had also an unfortunate influence on the French army, which, too, began to ask itself the question if the government had not really shown weakness and humiliated it in the eyes of Prussia. So what was feared might happen, actually did happen, and our last hopes were dashed to the ground. Germany and France became bitter enemies in spite of all I could do to prevent this lamentable result."

Though Louis Napoleon was by nature of a rather taciturn disposition, there were times when he was very communicative, especially if he were in the presence of a single friend, or was surrounded by a group of persons in whom he had perfect confidence. Particularly in the closing years of his life, he was not averse to speaking of the past, and most of the great political events of Europe and America during the middle part of the last century were thus passed in review by him who played not an unimportant part therein. The Emperor was a good talker. He expressed himself clearly, kept close to the point, often used picturesque and effective language, could become very animated and even eloquent, was very modest in all that concerned himself and very fair and kindly towards those who differed with him or who were even pronouncedly hostile to him. He had no biting tongue, and was charitable to friend and foe.

Notes of some of the Emperor's conversations have been preserved, made at the time by the Em-

press or some member of the immediate circle. Portions of these records have been scattered through the pages of this work. But few minutes exist of the longer conversations in which the Emperor sometimes indulged, which were generally the most interesting and the most valuable from a historical point of view. Of those of which a record has been kept, the following is one of the most extensive and not the least interesting. It occurred at Chislehurst. The interlocutor of the Emperor was one of his faithful adherents, the late M. Boinvilliers, who was a member of the senate during the second empire and a man of superior knowledge. The subject under discussion was the European situation after the battle of Sadowa, and the Emperor said with considerable animation:

"From the moment that Prussia, to the surprise of most persons, crushed Austria, I fully realized that war would one day become inevitable between the victorious power and France. Thereupon, at my suggestion, a military commission was appointed whose duty it was to prepare a bill which should provide for an army of from 1,200,000 to 1,300,000 men. During the three years extending from 1867 to 1870, I left no means untried to enlighten public opinion on the dangers of the situation and to convince all minds of the crying need of army reform. Official notes, articles inserted in the journals friendly to the government, statistics issued in the imperial bulletins, speeches delivered by the most prominent ministers, everything, in short, was tried but failed, however, to overcome the opposition constantly shown to the proposed strengthening of our military forces. I well remember how Marshal Niel,

the then Minister of War, lamented, almost with tears in his eyes, the spirit shown by the Opposition, which, while well disposed towards him personally, was incredulous and utterly unmanageable. The idea that a war was possible, much less probable, never entered their heads. There was not a budget committee of this period which did not consider itself in duty bound to reduce the estimates of the War Office, and lessen the number of men, horses, and cannon destined for the army, or the sum of money set aside for fortifications. Opposition candidates for election to the legislative body promised voters to cut down expenses and these promises were received with enthusiastic approval, unfortunately, as was soon discovered, for the best interests of the country. Finally, the proposed army bill, amended to death, was passed, but it was so emasculated that it did but little to improve the lamentable state of our military establishment.

"Those people who, later, accused me of desiring war without doing anything to prepare for it are the very ones who prevented us from being ready. At the age which I had then reached and after the plebiscitary triumphs which I had obtained, one does not rush headlong into risky enterprises without being forced to do so. The careful and long examination which I had made, into the comparative strength of France and Prussia, the deep regret which I felt over the impossibility of securing the much-desired army improvements, and my personal and dynastic interests,—all these things would have made even the most ordinary man prudent. It is sheer ignorance of human nature to imagine that I could entertain sentiments contrary to the most ordinary common

sense. It is certain that the Hohenzollern affair about the Spanish throne should have ended peacefully, at least for the time being, and would have done so if it had not been for the French national and patriotic spirit, which was more ardent than prudent. But we must not be held responsible for this popular movement. If one consults the records of that period, one will see how excited were men's minds, how violent was the press, how ardent was even 'the man in the street,' when the government tried to make him understand that the concession made by King William in this same Spanish imbroglio might at least be accepted as a breathing spell, which would afford time for reflection. It is useless now to recall the fact that the most noisy protests and the most bitter words against the empire, if we did not immediately avenge 'this national insult' came from those whose eloquent words and facile pens did not believe war possible and who refused to pass, or who cut down, all army appropriations, indignant at the mere thought of 'militarizing' France.

"When Frenchmen have become more calm and self-possessed, they will perceive, I think, that a parlimentary ruler, such as I was at that moment, could only govern through the chamber and with its daily approval; and so, when this war spirit seized the nation, I was forced to put myself at the head of the movement, which nobody could then question the strength of. But I should add that I never was so blind to the fact that, though we had had in France since January of that fatal year this parliamentary system, I knew who would have to shoulder all the blame if anything went wrong; and yet, when

this régime was established, I was highly praised, during a few days, for having reintroduced it into France! When the crisis came, the fiction vanished, and the monarch was held responsible for all that had happened. I knew this is what would come about but this did not influence me.

"And now, a word regarding the strength of the two countries, about which much that is true and false has been written and said. In the summer of 1870, we had in France proper 365,000 men, in Algeria 63,000, in Italy 5,000, making a total of 443,000 men from which should be deducted 108,000 men on leave; that is, we had an active army of 325,000 men. plus 218,000 reserves, or a grand total of 543,000 men. Prussia was able to muster 500,000 men, which included a large body of Landwehr from the various parts of the new confederation who were not at all friendly to Prussian hegemony. So, while it might appear difficult, it did not seem impossible, to vanquish our adversary. Numerically, we were not weak. Our weakness proved to be in quite another quarter. The real difficulty lay in a rapid passage from a peace to a war footing; and here we were not only defective, but our enemy exceedingly perfect. We lost too much time in this operation, or, if you prefer, the Germans gained too much. To this delay is to be largely attributed our defeat, and also to the too great confidence which the chamber and the country placed in the deputies who, notwithstanding the unalterable opinion of the ministers of war, maintained that our regular army was quite sufficient for the occasion and could have two or three months in which to muster and perfect its organization! Bearing in mind this attitude of the Opposi-

tion and their determination to prove the entire sufficiency and efficacy of the army as it stood, one can understand a fact which would otherwise remain inexplicable, viz., that there was not in all France a politician, a business man, a general, a journalist who entertained the slightest doubt as to our military success. You might have thought that some such individual would have turned up, if only to gratify that human weakness of wishing to be on the opposite side. No, enthusiasm and confidence ruled everywhere, and this enthusiasm and confidence increased when it was found that we had only one enemy to fight against.

"My adversaries in 1870 had their faults, and I had mine. They did not believe in me. I ought not to have believed in them. Events are often stronger than men. By this unwise desire to economize, these opponents of mine certainly never realized what would be the terrible consequence of their mistake. By vigorously fighting a government which was simply cautious, which they called 'prodigal' and 'tyrannical' and which, thanks to their continual attacks, had become simply 'a mere inadequate shield against mob violence,' they did not intend to overthrow it, nor expect to suddenly find themselves alone face to face with the 'red specter' which we were accused of making a bogey of, and thus be forced to carry on a terrible struggle with the spirit of hatred and envy which their own thoughtless conduct had given life to.

"The generals I chose were brave soldiers who, up to then, had performed their work nobly. Before defeat, they were the heroes of the nation, and their praise was in every mouth, at home and abroad.

To-day, their long career, made illustrious by brave deeds, is quite forgotten. It is my fate to be the target of every kind of calumny, but it is not without deep sorrow that I see these valiant officers assailed by party spite, and censured for keeping up their relations with me, as if a dethroned and imprisoned emperor were not enough to appease the rancor of these bitter partisans. This injustice conceals another which is still more heinous. These same gallant soldiers are condemned because they were put in their posts at my choice. But it is forgotten by their severe critics that those among them who were, for an instant, caressed by the Opposition, received from my government more favors than any others. These facts are forgotten in some circles. But they should not be.

"After our first defeats, I wished to hasten back to Paris. I had a presentiment that it was in Paris that the war would be decided, as it is there also that the fate of governments is determined. But the ministers held a contrary opinion, and I bowed to their decision. At Sedan, I did what the most humble French soldier knows how to do. Then I stopped the fighting and gave myself up as a prisoner of war. In acting thus, I was doing what I should have done. This suspension of hostilities in no way compromised the eventual capitulation, which the generals alone had a right to sign and which they did sign, but it saved the life of 80,000 men who had fought like lions all day long. This was worth doing, I think. If I had not acted as I did, all these brave fellows would have been uselessly massacred. Neither the country's interests nor its honor required such a dreadful sacrifice as this. We

surrendered because it had become impossible not to surrender. It is all right for easy-chair strategists to make plans and hold men's life as cheap as dirt. But those at the front sometimes take a different view of the situation.

"It has been said that if we had all been buried beneath the ruins of Sedan, it would have been better for my name and dynasty. That is possible. Nations sometimes love their princes as much for the remembrance of great misfortunes suffered together as for the remembrance of the benefits which they have received from them. But to know that one could save the life of such a body of heroic men, and not to do so, would have been an act which my conscience would never have condoned, especially as the greatness of my line was to be enhanced thereby.

"There was another reason why I gave myself up as a prisoner. Prussia declared openly that she was warring not against France but against me and my rights. There was ground for hope, therefore, that the conditions of peace would be easier if our enemy, having me in their hands, could say that the object of the struggle had been attained.

"I feel no desire to reign again, and yet it is possible that I may once more mount the throne. This depends on circumstances and not on my wishes. When a nation seeks out a prince and calls him to power, it is not done for his personal advantage, but because the nation wishes to profit by the form of government which that person represents. In 1848, France summoned me from exile, though I was unknown to her and my true character much disfigured by the misrepresentations of the then ex-

isting government. But the country felt the need of an orderly system of government and knew that I could give it the peace and security so much desired. A similar sentiment may again arise from similar needs. Then the French people will remember me or mine.

"I have not lost faith in the political principle which I represent. I still regard it as superior to those which are now struggling to get the upper hand in France. What happened at Paris on September 4, 1870, has not convinced me that France has changed its opinion regarding the great political system in the practice of which it has so long found its glory. While I believe this is true, I may be mistaken. It would be wise, therefore, to ask the country to decide what she wishes to be her future form of government. That is the only correct and final way out of the difficulty. So I always urge all my partisans to remain faithful to France and not to forsake the land of their birth. When the hour comes, the nation will speak out plainly and the politicians must obey."

The following pages are drawn up from notes left by the Emperor and from conversations held with him during this same Chislehurst period.

"There is an irresistible tendency which forces nations to unite and form great agglomerations. This tendency is based not on mere day-dreams and utopian fancies, but is the natural result of modifications brought about in economic conditions. Improved intercommunication draws peoples together, especially when they speak the same language, while solidarity of interests reawaken and produce a friendly understanding between them. Through

force of circumstances therefore, those nationalities, which the centuries have fractioned up, are brought together again and large and united nations are the result. This evolution of nationality is sometimes very slow in developing, and home or foreign influences may occasionally marshal various forms for the purpose of preventing a great country from taking on this new birth. These periods of waiting may be very long; there may seem to be eras during which no signs of development are observable. But sooner or later, the mighty current pushes its way through all obstacles and bursts forth at a moment when it is the least expected. The evolution of nationality is born in the uprising of peoples of the same origin and it is the most powerful or rather the best organized portion of those peoples which eventually swallows up all the others.

"This agglomerating principle, which Austria had overlooked, busied as she was in domineering over other nations of varied origin and language—the Hungarians and the Lombards, the Czechs and the Slavs—made itself felt when Prussia, regenerated and resuscitated, after her eclipse at the commencement of the century again became, through patience and endurance, a power in Europe.

"Much has been said concerning the consequences of Italian unity, especially as being one of the causes of German unity. The longing for and final accomplishment of Italian unity might indeed have been one of the influences which helped towards German unity, but it was surely not the only agent in bringing about the modifications in the nations on the other side of the Rhine. Prussia and the whole German Empire had been working on these lines

since 1813. Freeing themselves from the abstract influence of poetry and philosophy, which had long sung and preached a Greater Germany, they began to take a more practical view of the problem, and to ask themselves the question whether the only way to secure the long-wished-for union was not to be on the battle fields of some mighty national war. The tide came in slowly and these aspirations were long in reaching the high-water mark. Germans began to answer in the affirmative and with emphasis the oft-asked question whether their country should be once again, as in the days of the Hohenstaufens, the foremost nation of Europe. Austria, however, being otherwise engaged, Prussia was alone in a position to bring about this wish. But, since the day when the Electors of Brandenburg took their places in the European conclave, since the epoch when a man of genius—Frederick II—dared to oppose the power of Maria Theresa, Prussia had been invaded, crushed and almost annihilated; the Hohenzollern monarchy had been trodden under foot by Napoleon I, until Prussia had become little else than a mere 'geographical expression.' What patient strength of character, what a high ideal of the fatherland and what true nationalism that people had, for, with sovereigns of very ordinary capacities, the nation itself set going an enthusiastic patriotic movement and awakened in the popular heart a magnificent faith in the future grandeur of Germany, which the Pan-Germanic agitators carried through to success, aided to some extent by extraneous circumstances.

"Germany, often engaged in internal squabbles occasioned by private interests, has always had a clear eye when it came to viewing her general in-

terests, though she did not always realize that while her separate states worked together for the common cause, their equilibrium must eventually be lost. The old plan of counterbalancing Austria and the southern states with Prussia and the northern states was an admirable way of uniting against the common foe—France—which none of them could easily forgive for her long-held supremacy; but it was not the best way by which to prevent the smaller states from being eaten up by bigger and stronger neighbors, as some of these states now have learned to their sorrow, nor for keeping the peace between the two leaders.

"On the conclusion of the Italian war, Austria never seemed to dream of any possible danger threatening her in the direction of Prussia. It did not occur to her that it might be wise to draw near to France, notwithstanding the fact that we had just wrested from her the rich provinces of Lombardy, which, however, I handed over to Italy, and had been forced to permit the Austrian or allied princes to be driven from the Peninsula. When, the day after the battle of Magenta, the Prince-Regent of Prussia mobilized his troops and tried to make me believe that he meant to arrest the progress of my victories, then Austria was excused for believing that Prussia was actuated by a sentiment of friendship for her. But it was, nevertheless, a mistake to hold such an opinion. Though Berlin was adverse to an over-rapid growth of Italy and to our winning further laurels, and desired to make me feel that I had to count with Germany, that is, with Prussia, this was not done through any love for Austria. She meant to manage the business in accordance

with her own selfish interests, a fact which Francis Joseph learned to his sorrow a few years later.

"The 'little country' which in 1856 had begged me to obtain permission for her to take part in the European Congress, and which by that act alone became a 'great power,' had advanced a good deal since that date, and now—that is, after the Italian war—was preparing to advance still further. 'The opportunity is fine, too fine not to be seized,' said a well-known diplomat of the time, very truly. For a long period preparations had been going on for this purpose; preparations which were, at first, very quiet and peaceful in appearance. The great German universities, admirable centers of labor, learning and light, had, for fifty years or more, been turned into hot-beds for the forcing of thought and impulse looking towards the establishment of national unity. This daily gathering of students from all parts of the land in one lecture-room had swept away the prejudices of provincial minds. Clubs in favor of unity were formed; the great geniuses of Germany—philosophers, poets, historians, and scholars—inspired the big-hearted and enthusiastic youth; Goethe, Schiller, Kant, and many other celebrities, who made the other side of the Rhine famous at the end of the eighteenth and at the beginning of this century, did more for the unification of Germany than all the political and military efforts of the Bismarcks and Moltkes; in a word, the nation was ripe for transformation when the men of iron and fire appeared on the scene.

"I watched with close attention this early planting of the seed of German unity. I remember still very vividly the deep impression which was made

on my mind by the establishment of the Zollverein, that custom-house organization which was the first radical and practical step in the way towards national unification. 'It is the beginning of the end,' another diplomatic wit said to me during the empire, referring to this period and employing the well-known phrase of Talleyrand, used on quite another occasion. Thus, constituted as early as 1840 commercially, united Germany saw this movement receive another vigorous push forward by the introduction of railways. That unity was at hand was now sure; the only thing that was not perfectly clear at that time was under whose banner—the Prussian or the Austrian—was this unification to be finally achieved. Count von Beust, then Prime Minister of Saxony, fathered a plan which looked towards the establishment between Prussia and Austria—the satellites were to follow—of a sort of confederacy. Of course this fact is known now, but it was not so public in those days when I first heard of it and perceived at a glance all the significance of this important proposition. It was then admitted on both sides that such a confederation would lack strength and cohesion. Could it be brought about if Austria were to be the pivot and the head? was the question on the tongue of everybody who was privy to the proposal. I never thought so. Austria certainly had a predominant influence over the secondary German states and had in her favor all the ruling families, the nobility and the catholics of Germany. Her action on the diet was considerable and she could claim as an historical right a continuation of the supremacy in German affairs which she had so long en-

joyed. At Frankfort, in 1850, it looked for a moment as though Francis Joseph were going to recover the imperial crown of Germany, but on the contrary, the liberal party seemed to put its faith in Prussia, notwithstanding the highly aristocratic form of her constitution and the very authoritative fashions of her government. In a word, things had reached such a pass on the banks of the Rhine that both Prussia and Austria were reaching a point where they would likely come to blows as to which power should bring about the much desired unity of Germany; and both were asking which side France would probably take in the pending conflict.

"German unity, according to the Prussian plan, was the bringing together of all the German-speaking peoples on the other side of the Rhine, which would be the establishment of a power consisting of some 38 millions of inhabitants. Austria which would have acted as a counter-weight and which I hoped would have its place in the new combination, was entirely pushed aside in the Prussian scheme. We all felt on our side of the Rhine that such a mass ruled from Berlin was the setting up of a redoubtable state on our frontier. But, on the other hand, a united Germany, with Austria as the chief, meant a state of 38 millions of Germans and 37 millions of Austrians, that is, a total of 75 millions. Nor was this all. It was held then that if Austria brought this about, she would add to this total a good part of the Italian lands lost in 1859! So, on the one hand, we had staring us in the face, the danger of a reëstablished Holy Empire, which it had always been the policy of monarchical France to keep as

weak as possible; and on the other, the menace of a military power, less important as regards number, but better armed and better directed. Such was the situation across the Rhine when we were precipitated into the unfortunate conflict of 1870."

CHAPTER VII

CAUSES OF THE WAR OF 1870

THE following is the origin of the Prussian machinations which were to prove so fatal to France. I have gone somewhat into detail in narrating some parts of this history for two reasons. In the first place, there are certain incidents which are little known. In the second place there were among the Empress's papers various documents which have never been used and which throw many side-lights on this often rather obscure chapter of modern Europe. Perhaps I might add a third reason for the length of this portion of these memoirs,—I have wished to present Napoleon and Eugénie's version of this episode in the life of the Second Empire,—an episode so full of discredit to others in which they have been generally so unjustly blamed and whose results were mortal to the régime, to them, to so many of their faithful friends, and above all, to France, which for so long suffered from the terrible consequences thereof. Finally, I may state that, here and there in these pages, I have inserted bits of information emanating from the private correspondence of Comtesse de Montijo, who was at Madrid at this time.

In September, 1868, an insurrection broke out in Spain. The first signs of discontent showed themselves among the crews of the Spanish fleet in the

port of Cadiz. The trouble soon spread to the town and then throughout Andalusia. When it reached Madrid, it had grown to the proportions of a revolution. At this moment, Queen Isabella was at San Sebastian. At first, it was given out that she was on the point of returning to the capital; then this report was contradicted. At this moment, one of her friends who was with the Queen wrote the Empress as follows: "The insurrection is increasing and becoming so formidable that her Majesty has decided to cross the frontier into France." At Eugénie's suggestion the Emperor immediately offered Isabella a friendly refuge at the castle of Pau. This friend added later: "Was the Queen ill-advised in not trying to subdue the revolutionary party? Or was she acting wiser to let the storm spend itself in a country where, as subsequent events showed, the people were much attached to the Bourbon dynasty? These questions have often been asked but not always answered in the same way."

The uprising was the work of three parties—the Progressionists, who demanded important reforms, the Democrats, who favored a federal republic, and the Unionists, who represented the moderate wishes of the liberal middle class. Men of great ambition came to the head of affairs. Marshal Serrano and Admiral Topete belonged to the Unionist party, while Marshal Prim was chief of the Progressionists. Marshal Serrano became prime minister and Marshal Prim war minister of the provisional government which was immediately set up as soon as it was known that Isabella had crossed the frontier. Their chief aim was to reëstablish order. After quickly suppressing some riots, the

election of a new Cortes was arranged for. The voting passed off smoothly. Only a few republicans were chosen and the victory was divided between the Unionists and Progressionists, both of which parties were faithful to monarchical ideas. It was evident, therefore, that after a short interim, Spain would return to the monarchy, with simply a change of dynasty.

On February 11, 1869, the Cortes met and the great question now was to find a new king for the Spanish throne. Several candidates were immediately brought forward. Anxiety over the matter was forthwith felt in Berlin. "There must be no regent set up there to play into Napoleon's hands" was a sentence written by a high personage to Prince Albert. Who then should be elected? was asked. The Emperor has left an answer to this question, and his note runs as follows:

"For the Unionists, the best choice would have been the Duc de Montpensier, Louis Philippe's son, who had become a Spaniard through his marriage with the sister of Queen Isabella. For the Progressionists, it would have been better to take Prince Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg, widower of Queen Maria of Portugal, and father of the reigning king of that country. The king of Italy consented to the candidature of his son Amadeo, Duke of Aosta, while others mentioned Prince Alfred of England, Prince Philip of Coburg and Arch Duke Charles of Austria. In Germany, it was reported—and here was the starting point of the war of 1870—that there was a possibility that the successful candidate might be Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern, eldest son of Prince Anthony and brother of Prince Charles, who had been

called shortly before to reign over Roumania. Prince Leopold was thirty-five years old, married to a Portuguese princess, a catholic but not an ultramontane, a relative of the reigning family of Prussia, allied to the Murats and a grandson of Stephany de Beauharnais, grand-Duchess of Baden. We learned from Madrid that innumerable intrigues were being carried on. 'Prim is equivocal and will not speak out frankly,' wrote a French agent on the spot, 'while Serrano hesitates. General Cialdini has come up from Italy and won Prim over to the cause of the Duke of Aosta.' But in the end, the latter refused the crown, so did the Prince Ferdinand of Coburg. There then remained two candidates—the Duc de Montpensier and Prince Charles of Hohenzollern.

"I wished to take no part in these internal Spanish affairs; and yet it was stated that I was trying to bring about the restoration of the fallen régime. In March, when it was thought that the Montpensier plan would succeed, Olozaga, who had come on from Madrid as special ambassador, reported to Prim that such an issue of the affair would meet with the disapproval of this court. So I instructed the Marquis de La Valette, then our minister of foreign affairs, to inform our representative at Madrid that Paris would not meddle with Spanish affairs and that, as far as we were concerned, the proposed candidature could be accepted without hesitation. But Olozaga was determined not to have the Duc de Montpensier reach the throne and persuaded Prim to join Topete in another appeal to Prince Ferdinand, who, as everybody knows, refused the offer a second time, on April 5th. The disappointment was

great at Madrid, and the high-spirited Spaniards were naturally wounded that a little German princeling should turn away from the proffered crown of Spain. 'They sought to cast all the blame on the Duc de Montpensier,' so our Lisbon correspondent wrote us, 'who is making himself very popular at the Portuguese capital by trying to disparage Prince Ferdinand.' We were told that he called the attention of the Papal nuncio, Mgr. Oreglia, to the unfortunate liaison of Prince Ferdinand, which he made no effort to conceal, and urged that an end might be put to the scandal by the marriage of the parties. The fact is that the prelate did take the matter up, the Prince shortly afterwards married the Countess of Edla, and this act virtually put an end to all possibility of his ever becoming king of Spain! 'And this,' wrote our Lisbon agent, 'is just what Montpensier was driving at!'

"Met by such difficulties, we were informed one day that Prim had entered into negotiations with Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern. This is possible. Anyway, the negotiations must have been soon broken off, for we learned that Leopold had left for Bucharest where it was given out he intended to make a long stay. In the meantime, the partisans of the Duc de Montpensier kept hard at work. In fact, one afternoon, Count von Goltz, the Prussian ambassador, called on the Empress, 'in the name of Bismarck' he said, to inform her that the Spanish ambassador at Vienna had been in Berlin in March in order to sound the chancellor in regard to 'this Montpensier business' and 'found that he was not at all favorable to it.' At that moment, it is probable Prussia was thinking only of removing Spain

from French influence. But later, von Moltke put the dots on the i's, for I am told he said one evening in Berlin, in a small party: 'The revolutionary movement in Spain paralyzes Napoleon. It acts as a plaster. The Spanish leech draws very well. I would not see any objection to a republic being set up in Spain, for that would be the best means, failing the elevation of an Orleans prince to the throne, of bothering Napoleon.' In a word then at this stage of the proceedings, Prussia desired a republican Spain or would have consented to the reign of an Orleans prince, but would do nothing to aid him to mount the throne. But the advent of a German candidate would change the whole face of things and we knew that Bismarck was well disposed to wards the candidature of Prince Leopold who had already been much talked of."

There was a memorandum bearing on the Benedetti-Bismarck imbroglio drawn up by the Emperor's immediate circle. The portion bearing on the point now under examination ran as follows:

"The French ambassador in Berlin was instructed to find out the chancellor's views on this whole Spanish matter. He first saw von Thile, of the Prussian Foreign Office, to whom he said: 'Such a candidature is of great importance to the Emperor, and it would be my duty to inform him of the fact, if there was good ground to believe that it would be realized.' Von Thile assured Benedetti that there could be no question of such a candidature. This was on March 31, 1869. Soon afterwards, Benedetti was called to Paris and was received by the Emperor, who said to him: 'The Montpensier candidature is merely anti-dynastic; it only strikes at me

and I can permit it. But that of the Hohenzollern prince is essentially anti-national. It is aimed at France and the country will surely resent it; so it must be prevented at all hazards. Return to Berlin, talk the matter over with Bismarck, but be careful to use no expressions which might lead him to think that we are seeking a quarrel.' When Bismarck received the ambassador, he replied without any embarrassment to the somewhat reserved questions of Benedetti in these words: 'If Prince Leopold were elected by the Cortes, his reign could be but ephemeral and full of disappointment and danger. But the king of Prussia could not abstain from advising acceptance. However, Benedetti could be sure that Prince Anthony was far from dreaming of any such grandeur for his son Leopold; for, when he was making such great sacrifices in Roumania for his eldest son, would he be likely to seek new burdens and difficulties on the other side of the Pyrenees? It is not probable.'

"When Benedetti asked if the question had been considered, Bismarck did not hesitate to admit that he had talked the matter over with the king, and Prince Anthony. 'In any case,' said Benedetti, 'Prince Leopold would not accept the offer, I suppose, without first obtaining the king's consent.' Bismarck, it appears, did not deny the correctness of this observation, but avoided giving a positive answer and stuck to generalities. He again dwelt on the disappointments, intrigues and rivalries which would spring from this Spanish crown, and these rivalries, he thought, would cause considerable delay before a final choice was made. Benedetti repeated that France was very deeply con-

cerned in these Spanish developments. Bismarck again evaded the subject and Benedetti felt that he could go no further without fresh instructions from Paris. 'In order to escape the main purpose of my interview,' Benedetti reported, 'the chancellor, suddenly affecting a confidential tone, stated that Prince Frederick Charles was much tempted to try his fortunes in Spain. "But," he added, "the difference in religion would have been an insurmountable obstacle and even if willing to be converted to catholicism, this would not have removed all the prejudice against him. The prince is a brave and distinguished officer, but has never shown any aptitude for politics. So he would find himself floundering in the midst of a multitude of difficulties." ' As a matter of fact Bismarck would not make any promises for the future. While von Thile assured us on his honor that no underhanded effort was being made to put forward a German candidate, the chancellor let it be seen that nothing would be done to interfere with the future course of events."

The year 1869 came to an end without the question being openly taken up again. But, in the meanwhile, Bismarck was secretly making good use of one of his faithful servitors, Bernhardi, whom he recalled from Florence and sent to Madrid. His instructions were—so the Tuileries was informed at the time—"to favor everything which might displease France. It is well known that the cosmopolitan party will make every effort to bring about the establishment of a republic in Spain But we have no ground to look with apprehension on this, and should put no obstacles in the way of its realization. In reality, everything which tends to free

Spain from French influence is good and agreeable to the Prussian government. Whatever may be the form of the institutions finally adopted in Spain, the main interest to us lies in her breaking as much as possible with France. That is our sole desire.'' Bernhardi reached Spain at the end of May, 1869, and the first thing he did was to visit Andalusia, where the republicans had their strongholds. This move was not at first understood at the Tuileries. It was given out at first that the Prussian representative was ''making a pleasure voyage.'' ''But,'' said the Emperor wittily, ''it seems to me that von Bismarck's agent is like the old toper who always declared that he mixed water with his whisky. But he put in very little water, which in this case is 'the pleasure voyage' and lots of whisky, which in this instance is politics. Let us hope that unlike the toper, the mixture may not intoxicate either Bismarck or Bernhardi.''

Other diplomats were also examining cautiously the ground. Thus, Viscount de Seyssal, Portuguese minister to Belgium, who was on a leave of absence at Lisbon, said to Los Rios, the Spanish envoy sent to Prince Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg: ''Why don't you take advantage of your friendly relations with the influential men of Spain, and chiefly Prim, to secure the adoption of the Hohenzollern candidature? This would be an excellent choice, which would please Prussia and even Prince Ferdinand, while the only person who would be displeased would be the Emperor Napoleon.'' The Marquis of Oldoïni, an Italian diplomatist of great shrewdness, used similar language in speaking with an influential Portuguese, the Marquis of Niza, and sug-

gested that he sound Prim on the matter. He said, among other things: "This plan would please Prince Ferdinand, would be looked on with favor in Italy and, if necessary, would be supported in Prussia by Italian diplomacy." He declared that of course these were only his personal views. "But," said the Marquis of Niza, "I knew better and I told Los Rios that he had learnt this lesson from Seyssal." At the Tuileries, where all these bits of information came pouring in, it was held and held rightly that the Emperor always believed, that Seyssal and Oldoïni were simply emissaries under instructions from Berlin. In the meantime, the newspapers took up the question. A good sample of what they published on the subject was a letter from a Berlin banker addressed to Marshal Serrano and extolling the advantages of the Hohenzollern candidature. It has always been supposed, and the Emperor considered, with good reason, that this letter, like many other similar ones, was inspired by the Berlin Foreign Office. "This has been denied by Bismarck," the Emperor once said; and then he added, with a smile: "but if we believed all that Bismarck denied, we wouldn't believe anything."

A note by the Emperor concerning this period runs as follows: "Many efforts were made at this time to get me to favor the restoration of the fallen dynasty in the person of the Prince of the Asturias. It is true that both the Empress and myself felt a keen sympathy for him. But I felt it my duty to take no active part in this Spanish business. I contented myself with telling Silvela, one of Serrano's ministers, that I sincerely wished Spain all happiness and prosperity, and that she

alone should be arbiter of her own destinies. We tried to exert no influence at Madrid further than to tell Olozaga that any Hohenzollern candidate would be badly received in France, which was only too true. Nothing further was said for fear of appearing to dictate to the Spanish government. From the very first, public opinion in France had shown no enthusiasm for the Duc de Montpensier and this was an additional reason why we felt it would be in every way unwise to show any wish to meddle even in the slightest degree in Spanish affairs at this moment."

Monarchy was voted by the Cortes during the night of May 20-21st, 1869. "But what is the good of a monarchy without a monarch?" asked Napoleon III, when the Empress told him the news, early on the morning of the 21st. In default of anything better, Olozaga proposed a regency with Serrano as regent. Thereupon, Serrano talked the matter over with the French ambassador at Madrid, who reported the conversation to the Tuileries. He said: "Only a stable power can have authority. I am reminded of what occurred in the thirties and forties, when Espartero was regent and was backed by the Queen-mother Christina. The first had put an end to civil war and the second had sat on the throne, and yet peace came only with her fall. Imagine how much weaker my position would be. In less than three months, I would be a mere rag!" When this conversation reached the Tuileries by the slow post of those days in Spain, Serrano had been chosen regent and had accepted. So Napoleon made this comment: "Well, the good marshal runs more risk of becoming a rag-picker than a rag," referring to

the terrible ups and downs of Spanish political life during the last century. The same diplomat sent the Emperor this further scrap of conversation, which was more to the point. After stating that, at the same moment that Serrano was made regent, and Prim designated prime minister and minister of war, one of the latter's friend, Guerreso, thus defined Prim's views on foreign affairs: "He considers it very important to be and remain on good terms with France, but still more important to be and remain on good terms with Prussia." "There is the great danger," remarked the Emperor when he read this part of the ambassador's dispatch.

Prim, now firmly seated in the saddle, began again his search for a king for Spain. For the moment, he found Bismarck rather absorbed in home matters, struggling in the Reichstag with old friends who were conservative and new allies who were liberals. He also found the proposed pretenders more afraid than ever to mount the Spanish throne, when the Peninsula appeared to be in such a state of unrest. When approached, they either refused the proffered honor or asked time to consider the proposal. In the meanwhile, King William seemed to take renewed interest in the imbroglio. While at Baden, having heard that Count Nigra, the Italian ambassador to Paris, was in the city, he was invited to a very select dinner at which the Queen was present and at the end of which, the King withdrew with Nigra to his study, and entered into earnest conversation with him. He began frankly with these words:

"What does Napoleon want? Do you think he is seeking a war with me?"

"I do not know the Emperor's secrets," answered the ambassador, "but from what I do know, I think I may say that the Emperor has decided to make the best of the events of 1866 and the Northern Confederation, and that he has no intention of going to war unless he is forced to it, unless he is provoked thereto."

"What does he mean by 'provoked'?"

"If your Majesty keeps the Northern Confederacy within its present boundaries, peace will be maintained. But if the contrary happens, then I consider war inevitable."

"That step will not be taken. I know perfectly well that some day the Greater Germany will become inevitable by the very force of things. But I shall in no way hasten that event. In fact, at this very moment, I am resisting and will continue to resist with all my strength, the desires of my son-in-law, the grand duke of Baden, who wishes to unite his country with the Confederacy. You may say this to Napoleon when you see him."

Count Nigra carried this message to the Emperor, and many times afterwards conversed with the Empress, concerning this Baden dinner party, saying on one occasion: "I saw that the Emperor would have preferred something more than a mere verbal assurance. But he informed the Berlin court that he had heard with satisfaction the message I bore him. The King, in his turn, as I learned, thought that Napoleon might have been more outspoken on the subject. In fact, both courts remained suspicious of one another. The Emperor felt that the King was not making a sincere promise, while the King

believed that the Emperor was preparing for an early attack upon him."

One of the Emperor's aides-de-camp has left this inedited statement concerning the machinations of this period:

"The Emperor, who had been rather ill, was visited in October, 1869, by Prince Charles of Roumania, with whom he discussed his pacific intentions. We learned that Prince Anthony of Hohenzollern, who had been approached on the matter, would give no positive answer, and it was believed that the conditions made by Prince Leopold were equivalent to a refusal of the proffered honor. Nothing could be done with Prince Ferdinand of Coburg, and the Duke of Aosta had also refused. We were told that Prim was then casting his eyes towards the Duke of Genoa, nephew of King Victor Emmanuel, quite a young man who was finishing his education in England. We had good reasons for believing, however, that the Dowager Duchess of Genoa, his mother, and the King of Saxony, his grandfather, were much opposed to the plan, and we were not at all surprised at the beginning of January, 1870, to read his declination of the offer published in the official gazette of Italy. No wonder that at about this same date, the European press began to make joking allusions to the difficulty which Spain was experiencing in trying to find a monarch. One of them said: 'Why not try a republic since the throne tempts no prince?' The point was well taken and the Emperor would not have been opposed to this issue from the difficulty.

"Prim now began again to nourish hopes of finding aid in Germany and the Hohenzollern candidacy

once more seemed to him the only way out of the dilemma. It has been held that in thus playing into the hands of Bismarck, in thus acting against the best interests of Spain, the Marshal did not see what was sure to be the result of his action. Because the Emperor had not been opposed to the placing on the Roumanian throne of Prince Charles, he jumped to the conclusion that France would accept as readily this new plan. He was mistaken in this, or, as the Emperor well said to me one day: 'Prim let himself be fooled by himself, for how could he compare the throne of Spain with that of Roumania and how could he imagine that the Tuileries would look on unconcernedly while he put a Prussian monarch on our southwestern frontier?'

"I always felt that Prim admitted that there was *some* danger in his scheme; but he under-estimated the amount of that danger. At this moment, he said to a diplomat at Madrid: 'Whether we do this or something else, France will be displeased. She would be dissatisfied with a Montpensier, a republic, or anybody else.' These words got back to us and were not relished, naturally. 'He forgot, or pretended to have forgotten,' remarked the Emperor, 'the very clear language used by Benedetti at Berlin the preceding year.' The fact is that he thought by his cleverness, by his influence on Napoleon, who had known him for a long time, he would somehow convince him that this Prince of Hohenzollern was a cosmopolitan, allied or related to the Coburgs, the house of Braganza, the Murats, the Beauharnais,—that in a word, as the Emperor put it, 'he was related to everybody and could be all things to all men.' At another time the Emperor truly said: 'From

Spanish embarrassment and Prussian covetousness was to spring the fatal plan which was to precipitate affairs. Prim and Bismarck were about to put their heads together and agree on the right method, which, according to them, should be adopted. King William might, from the very start, have pointed out the risk, encouraged Prince Anthony in his inclination to refuse and prevented Bismarck from listening to the proposals of Salazar and Prim. I am sure the King still wished for the continuation of peace and yet he did next to nothing to keep the spark from falling into the powder."

The name of Salazar y Mazarredo has just been mentioned. This active individual was the first to suggest to the Spanish nation the name of the Hohenzollern prince. This was done in a pamphlet which he published in 1869. He had several interviews with the German princes and then issued a second pamphlet. He met them at Weinher Castle; but no success seemed to crown his efforts. He next sounded Prim as to the way he looked on his plans, and eventually managed to obtain letters of introduction to King William and Count Bismarck. At the beginning of February, 1870, he started for Berlin without informing Olozaga or the Spanish ambassador to Prussia of his intended journey. His mission, however, was not a very brilliant success. The King declined to receive him, though he was seen by Bismarck and met other important political personages. When he returned to Madrid, he remarked: "Well, anyway, I have forced the thin end of the wedge into the crack," and in fact, negotiations were soon under way in court and government circles. The French representative at Madrid

reported that Salazar declared that "the prince royal of Prussia objected because of the unsettled state of the country and advised the prince to accept only on certain conditions." From Berlin we learned that "Bismarck was of the opinion that the offer should be accepted, declaring that from a political point of view, it was well, in the event of war, to be able to count on the friendship of a nation bordering one of the frontiers of France; while, from an economical stand-point, Spain under a German ruler would offer fresh markets for German manufacturers."

M. Stratt, then Roumanian agent in France, has left this memorandum, which is here made public for the first time in this, its original form:

"I learned that a family and governmental council was held at Berlin on March 15, 1870. King William presided, and the other members of the meeting were the Prince Royal, Prince Anthony, Prince Leopold, Bismarck, Moltke, Roon, Thile and Delbrück of the German Foreign Office. I learned that with a single exception all agreed that the offer should be accepted. This exception was Prince Leopold, who hesitated from the very start and then tried openly to refuse the honor. But the father was more ambitious than his son and was loath to let escape from his family this proffered crown. So he suggested that if Prince Leopold was unwilling to accept, it might be bestowed on another of his sons, Prince Frederick. This prince was then traveling in southern Europe, and was not much surprised when he heard of the proposal, for he told me that he had already been sounded on the subject by the Spanish minister in Florence. So he started for

Berlin. In the meantime, Prince Anthony was corresponding with his other son, Prince Charles of Roumania. All these things were beginning to attract attention and it was at this stage of the proceedings that I got wind of the matter. Prince Anthony was disturbed at this and declared to a diplomat who told it to me that 'the scheme would fall through if it got bruited about,' and added: 'I have informed Stratt that Leopold positively refused the crown. He does not need to know anything further.' It is easy to understand why, for if officially advised of the negotiation, I would have mentioned the matter in Paris, and this is just what the schemers did not want done!"

Another rather curious fact which has not often been mentioned. Major von Versen, who had followed the war operations, between Paraguay and Brazil, towards the end of the sixties, and so became well acquainted with the Spanish language and customs, says in an unedited letter: "At the time of the Hohenzollern affair, I traveled a whole month in Spain, sounding opinion in various circles, and I soon got the impression that the candidature of Prince Anthony's son would be very acceptable to the country. I then returned to Berlin in May, 1870, and drew up a memoir to that effect. I rather expected to be felicitated on the success of my mission, but von Bismarck was ill at Varzin and I was not received by him. But this might have been a 'diplomatic illness'; for in the meantime, Prince Frederick had returned from his trip in southern Europe and respectfully informed his father that he would accept the throne of Spain only if formally ordered to do so. But I learned on the best author-

ity, that neither the King of Prussia nor the Prince Royal ventured to give such an order. They saw, furthermore, that it was useless to try again to get Prince Leopold to change his mind. So it was decided to send a telegram to Prim and inform him that he had better abandon his labors in the direction of the Hohenzollerns. This is why so little interest was taken in my arrival at Varzin, since it was known that I had come to advocate a plan which was already abandoned."

M. Stratt writes: "The copy of a letter written on April 22, 1870, by Prince Anthony to Prince Charles of Roumania, reached me in Paris. It ran as follows: 'After Leopold's refusal, the throne was offered to Fritz. He was strongly urged from Madrid to accept the offer. But your brother also replied that he could not think of entering upon so hazardous an enterprise. So I fear the affair is going to fall through and the house of Hohenzollern is going to lose a great historical opportunity, a chance such as we have never had before and will probably never have again. If the King had given the order, Fritz would have obeyed; but being left free to choose his own course, he declined the proffered honor. And so ends the matter. This episode will soon be forgotten and will be recalled only by some historian of our house in the far distant future.' "

So, at the end of April, 1870, this Hohenzollern danger seemed to have been averted. But Major von Versen was to be the artisan of the renewal of the enterprise. He could not get over the thought of seeing abandoned a scheme, which he quickly perceived offered him a fine opportunity to play a

prominent part. He was tenacious and finally succeeded in his aim. This is the way in which he tells it in his own words, the following paragraph being taken from a manuscript:

"I was received by the Prince Royal of Prussia, who gave me a letter of introduction for Prince Anthony, whom I found at Nauheim. I succeeded in convincing him that the game was not yet lost and that with a little courage and perseverance, all might still be well. So Prince Anthony wrote a letter to the Prince Royal in which nothing was said about the impossibility of carrying the project through; it was now simply a matter of hesitation. Nor was there any reference to Prince Fritz, who had returned to the more obscure existence, which he seemed to prefer. Once more Prince Leopold is brought to the fore, and this time the arguments advanced in his favor are very different from those used on the earlier occasions. Now, Prince Leopold was not so energetic in refusing to yield to his father's suggestions, and declared that he was 'vacillating between his duty towards his own house and this unexpected call from the Spanish frontier.' At the end of May, Prince Anthony wrote as follows to Prince Charles of Roumania: 'The affair is not buried; its life hangs by a thread or two,—threads as weak as those of a spider's web.' But I found these threads growing stronger every day. From a state of hesitation, Prince Leopold now emerged into a disposition of willingness, to study the whole situation seriously, and finally announced that he might accept the offer on certain conditions. In fact, he said one day to me about this time: 'I find the political situation in Spain an interesting problem for

study. Perhaps I have no right to refuse to help a great nation which is seeking to regain its former grandeur and which has appealed to me for aid.' The Prince Royal immediately advised the King of this change. I am told that at first, King William was displeased. He had supposed that the negotiations, in so far as they concerned a Hohenzollern, were at an end, and could not hide his astonishment and vexation at the matter having been taken up again without his having first been consulted. I am informed that he said to the Prince Royal: 'What will Europe think of all this? And what will France say? Will it not be displeasing to the Emperor? You know, I hesitated to let Prince Charles mount the throne of Roumania. This Spanish affair is far more serious. Anyway, it seems to me now at least that the father and son are agreed on the subject, which was not the case before.' ''

In the meantime, nothing had leaked out at Madrid concerning the new Hohenzollern negotiations, and the solving of the problem seemed as far off as ever, the journalists of various countries again growing facetious at the expense of Spain. Here belongs a private letter of John Lemoine, the distinguished contributor to the *Journal des Débats,* which is here first made public. This clear-headed writer on foreign affairs wrote to a friend:

''I said the other day in the *Débats:* 'We advise the Spanish nation to collect all their candidates around a table d'hôte and divide between them the twelfth-night cake. Then the one who finds in his piece the bean will be immediately proclaimed king!' Since writing these lines, I understand that Prim has received a message from Bismarck, who declares

that, after due reflection, Prince Leopold's candidature appears to him to be excellent. But he does not think it should be discussed at Berlin. Prim should address himself direct to Prince Leopold's family. Thus, thanks to this ingenious idea of Bismarck, the matter becomes a private affair, and the King of Prussia can be supposed to know nothing about it. Then, if the scheme falls through, he need not feel anything personal in the break-down. This plan appears to have the great advantage of annoying us without throwing any of the responsibility of it on Prussia. No wonder that at first, Prim, as I am informed, did not believe such a scheme feasible. At the Cortes, as you have seen, he gave an account of the whole series of disappointments which he had experienced in trying to find a king. He related how he had failed in his negotiations with Prince Ferdinand, with the Duke of Aosta and with the Duke of Genoa. He alluded to a fourth candidate 'whom I will not name,' he said, 'and with whom I have had no better luck.' Of course this refers to the candidate whose name is now on everybody's lips. After leaving the Cortes, I understand that Prim forthwith began to start going the scheme suggested by Bismarck. He sent for Salazar, explained matters to him and told him to start immediately not for Berlin, but for Sigmaringen, where he met Prince Anthony, on June 19th. Prince Leopold, whom Major von Versen, had gone to get, was also there. This time, I learn things went as smoothly as though on wheels. Doubtless, Prince Leopold had come to the conclusion that it was better to be king of even such a broken down country as Spain than to remain a simple staff officer in the

Prussian army. On June 20th, though stipulating that he could not act definitely until he had King William's consent, he said that, as far as he himself was concerned, he was ready to accept the offer. I further understand that King William, who was then at Ems, showed great astonishment at the haste with which the matter had been conducted. He sent no immediate reply, wishing to let Prince Leopold have a loop-hole for escape, in case he wished to back out of the bargain, after all, and also wishing to protect himself from any blame which might be laid at his door, later on."

All wondered, at the Tuileries, where all these negotiations were followed with much concern, whether advantage would be taken of the Cortes being in session in order to hasten matters. Those who were in the secret believed that this would be the case. But the Tuileries was not surprised to see that Prim took a different view of the best course to pursue. Seizing the opportunity offered by a pretended mistake in the date fixed for the departure of the Salazar mission, he told the deputies that he could not expect them to await the return of this mission nearly in the middle of July, "with such heat as that then prevailing." So for humanitarian reasons, he dissolved the Cortes and let the deputies hurry off to the cooler country. Of course, the aim of Prim was to gain time. At least, so the Tuileries interpreted his action. He hoped, too, we are told, to be able during the summer, to meet Napoleon at Plombières or Vichy, "where he could talk over the whole matter quietly with him," wrote the French representative at Madrid, "and point out to him and convince him that, in view of the cosmopolitan alli-

ances of the Hohenzollerns, the proposed candidature was not a danger for France. He hopes in this way to have the ground favorably prepared when the Cortes meets and all the sharp corners of the question smoothed down. 'But if my plan is to succeed,' Prim said to me the other day, 'great caution must be shown and the most delicate handling practiced.' But, unfortunately for the marshal, Salazar is too proud of the mission he has just performed and no sooner has he got back to Spain than he begins to speak about it to everybody right and left. So when Prim, returning from the country, reached this city on July 2nd, he found some intimate friends awaiting him at the station, who immediately congratulated him on the happy outcome of his negotiations. He then learnt, not without surprise, that the candidate's name had just been made public and that political circles were already busy discussing it. Prim immediately saw the grave mistake made by the indiscreet Salazar, and, I am told, exclaimed: 'This means lost labor and the compromising of the candidature. God grant that it may not be still worse than this!' As soon as I heard of this, I called on the marshal, who seemed to receive me with less effusion than usual and who appeared to be embarrassed. Suddenly, as if deciding then and there what line of conduct he should adopt, Prim led me into his study, and frankly opened up the subject which was in the mind of both of us. 'I must say a word to you about a thing which, I fear, may not be pleasing to the Emperor,' he began, 'but I count on you helping to so manage it that he will not take it too badly.' He then went into details concerning the whole list of candidates,

saying: 'I might have obtained the nomination of the Duc de Montpensier, or I might have come out for a republic. What I preferred was an Italian or a Portuguese project. But I have failed in all this. Now, Spain needs a king. The one we now have in view—you know to whom I refer—(he spoke as though he feared the walls had ears) is of suitable age, is a Catholic, a soldier, has two sons, has a Portuguese wife, which is in his favor,—you can understand, I must not let this unique chance escape us. But how do you think the Emperor will take it?' In reply, your Majesty can believe, I did not hide my thoughts. 'I, of course, cannot say just what the Emperor's impressions will be when he learns what has been done,' I began; 'but I can give you very clearly and immediately my own views on the subject. I think this is a most serious move, which is likely to have very wide-spread consequences. This elevation of a Prussian prince, under present circumstances, will produce the worst possible effect in France and may be taken as a provocation.' The marshal answered: 'In the nineteenth century, a dynastic alliance has no importance. What could a foreign prince do in our country, ruling under the most liberal constitution of Europe and governing a proud and independent nation like ours? Even in the days of pure monarchy, you know that Louis XIV and his grandson very nearly came to war with one another.' 'All that is quite true,' I replied; 'but in case of a European war, we should feel that our Pyrenean boundary was not safe with a Prussian prince on the throne of Spain.' The marshal then returned to his theory concerning the slight importance of dynastic alliances in these days. 'But

you must keep in mind,' I answered, 'the sensitiveness of the French nation and the displeasure of the Emperor.' Prim: 'I would put up with the consequences so far as France is concerned, but I should not like to do anything that would be disagreeable to the Emperor.' 'But do you imagine that it will be possible to separate France from the Emperor?' I exclaimed. Prim: 'Then, what can we do?'—'Take the Almanac de Gotha, and try and find a prince whose nomination awakens no objections.' Prim: 'But I do not see any other who would answer the purpose. Our poor Spain is to be pitied. I didn't invent this scheme: it was suggested to me. I cannot, under the circumstances, reject it for you must remember that the plan has already been once rejected and has now come to the surface again. If we let this opportunity escape us, we shall be forced to fall back on the Duc de Montpensier.' 'Well, why not Montpensier?' Prim: 'Do you really think that the Emperor would prefer Montpensier to Hohenzollern?' 'He has not told me so, but I am sure of it, for first and above all things, the Emperor is French.' The marshal seemed much impressed with what I said, and then added: 'I was hesitating whether I should inform the Emperor through you or through our ambassador in Paris. But it has seemed best for me to speak to you first. I feel sure that you will do everything in your power to avoid any course that will make matters worse. In the meantime, I will write to Olozaga and instruct him to speak with the Emperor on the subject. It will be an unpleasant mission for him. But it cannot be helped.' Then he added in a sad tone of voice, in which cunning

and sincerity were blended: 'It is hard for me to be obliged to do a thing which is disagreeable to you, when you have worked so diligently to prevent any misunderstandings arising between our two countries.' "

Thereupon, the ambassador returned home, gave an order that an attaché should be ready to start for Paris, and telegraphed on this important news. The first part of the drama had been played in Marshal Prim's cabinet! The Empress was particularly moved by the news, when it reached her on July 3rd, for she always had a peculiar feeling for anything that came from the other side of the Pyrenees. "M. Mercier de Lostende exactly expressed my mind," said the Emperor to the Empress that night, "and I am greatly worried over this telegram. The devil seems to have got into Prim. He is more Hohenzollern than the Hohenzollerns."

A few weeks before this, there had been a change in the ministry of foreign affairs; Comte Daru was succeeded by the Duc de Gramont. The latter had been the French ambassador to Vienna. The Empress looked upon him, as did the Emperor, as a man of large experience. He had had a brilliant career, was steeped in diplomatic traditions, was very patriotic and was exceedingly punctilious regarding the maintenance of our long-admitted superiority in the foreign affairs of the Continent. He and the Emperor did not always agree, however, on the question of Italian unity, and he still more deeply regretted the great strides that German unity had made. Here the Empress warmly approved his view, and when the Emperor came mildly to the support of this unfortunate feature of his own foreign

policy, they took sides against the latter. He was a thoroughly honorable man from every point of view and was held in high esteem by the French aristocracy and all the European cabinets. Of course, his ideas, based on what he had experienced at Vienna after Sadowa tended to bias his judgment in all that concerned Prussia. This was the only side of the appointment which at this moment carried danger with it.

"Gramont has always felt that France should have received some compensation after the events of 1866," said the Emperor to the Empress later. This feeling showed itself in the way in which he took up from the very start, this Hohenzollern affair. Eugénie always felt that he should have first turned to Madrid and have asked for explanations from Prim. But instead of doing this, he took the most dangerous course; he addressed himself direct to the Berlin cabinet through our ambassador there. The tone of his telegram to the French ambassador was exceedingly haughty, and was in substance as follows: "We do not take this candidacy of Prince Leopold seriously, nor do we believe that the Spanish nation will accept it. However, we cannot view without some surprise, a Prussian prince seeking to mount the Spanish throne. We would like to believe that the Berlin cabinet is a stranger to this scheme; but if this is not the case, the course which that cabinet is pursuing would awaken thoughts of such a special nature that I cannot mention them in a telegram. But I do not hesitate to say now, that the impression caused by this news is a very bad one and I instruct you to describe it as such. I await with impatience for the details which you may

be able to give me concerning this unfortunate affair."

The Emperor was not shown the text of this telegram till after it was sent, nor did the Duke apparently consult the other members of the cabinet, for it was only on his arrival at the Palais Bourbon that Marshal Leboeuf learned through the deputies that a new Hohenzollern affair had arisen. As for the Empress, she did not hear of it till considerably later. All this was a mistake, and it is no wonder that an affair which began so badly should have ended still worse.

At that time of the year, the summer exodus had begun at Berlin. The king was at Ems, Count Bismarck at Varzin and Count Benedetti at Wiesbaden. M. Le Sourd, the first secretary of our embassy, who received the Duc de Gramont's telegram, was only able to see the under secretary of state, Herr von Thile. These facts are well known; but what is less known perhaps, is what I learned then and what I have more than once heard since, that when Herr von Thile heard the contents of the telegram, he "appeared much surprised and embarrassed" and said at first, that he must consult the King before making any reply. Later, he declared, however, that the Prussian government had nothing to do with this candidature; but he was very careful not to say that the Prussian government knew nothing of the negotiations which led up to the present results. In other words, Herr von Thile was splitting hairs. The Empress said so at the time to the Emperor, who agreed with her. It is easy to understand that this conduct at Berlin, this equivocal attitude made an unpleasant impression on the Duc de Gra-

mont. "This all strikes me as exceedingly tricky," he remarked in my hearing one evening at this time. Even a less generous mind would have been offended by it. He immediately turned to the representatives in Paris of Prussia and Spain for light on the subject. When the Empress found him doing this, she said to the Emperor: "This is a wise move, it seems to me; only I think it would have been much wiser, if the Duke had done this before he sent that telegram." The Emperor answered: "If he had done so, he probably would never have sent it." There is no question of this in my mind. Herr von Werther, the German ambassador, was preparing to leave on a congé, if I remember rightly, when the Duke's request for information reached him. And now he set to work packing more rapidly than ever! He wanted to get out of the fix of having to reply to such a bothersome and delicate question! But Senor Olozaga did not have such a good excuse, and at first he squarely denied the truth of the information. But Marshal Prim took the only course open to him, and expressed great regret at being obliged to do anything which was not agreeable to France. "But this does not prevent him from continuing his machinations," truly said the Emperor. At the same time, he learned that the Spanish cabinet had met on July 4th, and had decided to convene the Cortes for the 20th.

The Duc de Gramont next strove to secure the support of foreign nations in his effort to prevent the success of this Hohenzollern candidacy. On July 5th, he said to Lord Lyons, the British ambassador, who repeated the remark a day or two later: "I feel certain that the offer has been accepted. It

is contrary to our interests and is, moreover, a blow at our national honor. We cannot accept a proposal which, in case of war, with Prussia, would force us to immobilize a large body of men on the Spanish frontier. In this crisis, we count on the aid of the Queen's government." "And I feel pretty sure that he will have it, in so far as we can go," said the ambassador earnestly to me and the Emperor. And if I am not mistaken, we did have it; for in after years, the Queen, whenever she referred to that lamentable period, always showed the greatest love for France.

The Duc de Gramont also requested the Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs, von Beust, to exert his influence to stop this Hohenzollern candidature. At the Tuileries one evening, he said to Prince Metternich, in my presence: "I think your government would do well to bring pressure to bear at Berlin, in order that, in the interest of peace, Prince Leopold withdraws from his present very questionable position." And the Prince replied immediately that he would do so. I know, too, that General Fleury, at St. Petersburg, was instructed to urge the same thing at the Russian capital, and we learned afterwards that he pressed the matter with the greatest force. The same evening, that the Duke spoke to Prince Metternich, he gave this view of the affair: "Our right to make this demand, cannot be questioned, I think. This is all the more true from the fact that this blow has evidently been premeditated by Bismarck. Of this I am sure there can be no doubt, either." "But," interrupted the Emperor, "do you think it wise to denounce so hastily the insult we have received? That seems to me to be

the important point. The difficulty lies in the fact that we shall have a double task. In the first place, we must get Prussia to bend to our wishes, and then, if she does so, we must afterwards succeed in appeasing those who will be offended by our success." The Duke answered: "I have requested von Werther, who will see the king, shortly at Ems, to point out to his Majesty all the dangers of the situation, and to especially call his attention to the fact that it is impossible for us to draw back from our present position. Your Majesty knows that I am on the best of terms with the Prussian ambassador and he has promised me to do all in his power to accomplish what we wish. I count much on this effort. A conversation is so much more effective than a correspondence."

The news of the Hohenzollern candidature did not spread very rapidly at Paris, for the 3rd of July fell on Sunday. "So the money market will remain quiet," remarked the Emperor with evident pleasure. It was not till the 5th, when the foreign newspapers, which contained ominous comments on the situation, arrived at the capital, that the public began to get nervous. Thereupon M. Cochary, of the moderate left in the legislative body, expressed a wish to interpellate the government on the situation. The Emperor's comment was to the point as usual: "Why, this means that under pretence of 'restraining' the militant policy of the cabinet, this disturbing incident will be spread more widely by the very act of those who most desire peace!" The interpellation was to take place on July 6th. The ministers, sitting at Saint Cloud, foresaw great dangers, and all were very anxious. Opinions differed very wide-

ly. "Many men, many minds," said the Emperor one morning to the Empress, in English. He used now and then, at all periods of his life, to recall some pat English phrase that clung to his mind from his residence in English-speaking lands, though it cannot be said that he ever had a firm grasp on the English language. The so-called war Party—for I am quite ready to admit that there was one, though the Empress was not of it, as has so often been falsely asserted by her enemies—made a great hue and cry. "We cannot believe," they said, "that any Frenchman is so base that he will permit an understanding to be brought about between Spain and Prussia, on these lines." We should remember how exasperated the people were by all these things and not be too severe on the government during this terrible crisis. As the Emperor often said then and ever afterwards: "The cabinet alone is not to blame for the unfortunate events." The cabinet weighed all the hypotheses. The Emperor was really ill. The day before the sitting there had been a medical consultation, which was kept a secret; a mistake, I have always thought, and this opinion was shared by the Emperor. He desired peace. This assertion cannot be questioned by anybody who knows the real state of his mind at that time, and the Empress warmly supported him in his same view of the situation. At this meeting of the cabinet the whole question of war or peace was gone over. Especially Marshal Leboeuf was questioned. It should not be forgotten that he declared that at that moment 300,000 men stood ready to march,—250,000 within a fortnight and the remainder ten days later. Then there was the national guard which

was being got ready. One of the ministers asked what allies could be counted on. He was told that France could rely on the sympathy of Italy—I must confess that I find the word "sympathy" rather a vague expression at such a crisis—on the moral support of Austria, which again was not a very solid aid, and on the neutrality of the southern states of Germany. Thus, sympathy, moral support and neutrality were the very shadowy "allies" which France had in view at this time. And knowing this, the Emperor and the Empress are said to have been partisans of this insane Franco-German conflict! The groundlessness of the assertion is equaled only by its absolute absurdity!

At the council of ministers a manifesto was drafted and it was decided that the Duc de Gramont should read it in lieu of a reply to the coming interpellation. The gist of this document the original draft of which I have before me, was as follows: "The duke urged that the proposed debate should not take place because the Cortes had not yet given its approval to the proposal of a Hohenzollern mounting the Spanish throne and also because the French government and the legislative body were in the dark concerning the whole matter. There could be no practical outcome, therefore, to the discussion at that time." Spain and her people were referred to in the friendliest and most complimentary manner, and then the Duke added: "But we do not think that respect for the rights of a neighboring nation oblige us to permit a foreign power to disturb the equilibrium of European forces and to imperil the interests and honor of France, by placing one of its princes on the throne of Charles V. We

firmly hope that such an event will not occur, and in order to prevent it, we count on the wisdom of Germany and on the friendship of Spain. But should we be mistaken in this, feeling sure that we have the support of the legislative body and the nation, we will do our duty without hesitation and without weakness."

None of the ministers considered this a warlike manifesto. The Emperor did not, nor did the Empress. It was, at least, not meant to be warlike in the usual sense given to that term. It announced certain governing principles concerning a possible event which might be brought about without our consent. I will admit that there was considerable difference of opinion especially in the legislative body concerning the advisability of issuing such a message. A friend who was present at the sitting came immediately afterwards and told the Emperor and the Empress that the reading was wildly applauded by the Right and the majority followed the example thus set. The center, he said, was more reserved. At least this was his impression. Thiers said to his friend in the lobbies and later said the same thing from the tribune, that he found that the government had acted hastily. He kept reiterating this word hasty, "But he is getting old, and so repeats himself," said this friend with a smile. The Emperor has since declared: "Why did M. Thiers who had always posed as a great patriot, wait till the eleventh hour before saying anything on this subject? When certain deputies of the extreme opposition—Glais Bizoin and Crémieux for example—publicly declared that the government was seeking a pretext for going to war, they were

making a charge which was not only false but was compromising a pacific issue from the difficulty, which issue we were all desiring." That same evening, if I am not mistaken, M. Emile Ollivier said to the Empress: "I told the deputies this afternoon that when they had read over carefully our declaration, they would see that it was not provocative, that it in no way attacks the legitimate rights of the Spanish nation, which we all look upon as a friendly power, and that, above all things, it in no respect lends itself to the interpretation that the government entertains any doubt as to whether it prefers peace to war." The Empress told M. Ollivier that both the Emperor and herself had so judged the manifesto before it was read and that they were all the more of that opinion now that they had seen it in cold type. But the newspapers took the matter up, and, as usual, made things still worse. Jules Favre had said in the legislative body that "the declaration was an offence to Prussia," and this statement was made the keynote of the comments thereon of several of the leading Paris sheets, though others took a more truthful view of the case. All this led to signs of agitation and noisy gatherings on the Boulevards. One could perceive this increased agitation from the very windows of the Tuileries, when there, and the echoes even reached the more quiet retreat of Saint Cloud.

Lord Lyons told the Empress that on the 7th, he had written to Lord Granville: "However strong the declaration may be, it does not exaggerate the feelings of the nation." And he was quite right in this statement. Eugénie told him so at the time. "Europe is beginning to feel anxious," he replied.

In the meantime, Prussia maintained, as had been her habit all along, complete silence. From what has since transpired, I am not far wrong, perhaps, when I say that Bismarck and von Moltke were not only studying plans to be in readiness in case action should be necessary, but were preparing new "incidents," if they should be necessary. On this point, the Emperor has left this memorandum: "Bismarck and his coterie were somewhat embarrassed, for it appeared pretty clear that this Hohenzollern affair was too Spanish to move very deeply northern Germany, while it would produce still less effect on the southern states. To awaken German patriotism to the boiling point the incident must be exaggerated in some way and national pride must be wounded. We learned on good authority that both Bavaria and Wurtemberg were not at that moment displeased at the pass to which events might bring Bismarck. In the meantime, Count von Beust was advising the smaller states to circumscribe the conditions of their alliance with the northern confederation and only aid Prussia in case that an aggresion came from France. The Berlin cabinet let it be cleverly understood that it had nothing to do with the Simaringen negotiation; that an aggressive front would not be presented to France and that only in the case of an attack would force be resorted to. In the meanwhile, the more violent articles from the Paris press were spread over the land and public opinion throughout Germany gradually worked up a tension. We at the head of affairs saw the danger and feared what was coming. From diplomatic sources we learned that von Thile was still feigning ignorance of all that was going on

and the Prussian chargé d'affaires in Paris, von Solms, gave us to understand that as the ambassador was absent, he could say nothing. At London, however, the Prussian embassy was not so taciturn. Count von Bernsdorff spoke out violently concerning the Duc de Gramont's declaration. We were told that he said that 'my government, though not wishing for a war, did not draw back with fear at the thought of war. You may be sure, too, that the King of Prussia will never formally veto Prince Leopold's accepting the throne.' ''

The Ems act of this Hohenzollern drama has often been told and all the actors on the scene have printed their accounts of it or had their accounts printed by others. But I feel that the account of Napoleon and Eugénie, or at least the view taken at the Tuileries and Saint Cloud, may well be told. It may not change any of the main facts, but it will surely add some details, some personal impressions, that may not be uninteresting. Anyway I propose telling what the Empress thought and knew of that unfortunate episode in French history and French diplomacy.

As is well known, in the evening of July 7, 1870, Count Benedetti, the French ambassador at Berlin, was instructed to go to Ems, see the King and obtain from him the consent to have Prince Leopold withdraw his candidature. Of course these instructions were drawn up with the greatest care. The Emperor went over the text of the dispatch and the Empress saw it more than once. All felt that this was a most dangerous and delicate move that they were making. It will be remembered that the gist of the Duc de Gramont's dispatch was in this pas-

sage: "We cannot accept the evasive reply of Herr Von Thile. It is absolutely necessary that you obtain a categorical reply." The aim was not only to secure the abandonment of the candidature, but to secure the king's special approval of this act. The Tuileries knew that two days before, Prim had said to the French ambassador at Madrid: "I see only one way by which we can get out of this predicament. The prince should inform me that he cannot get the King's consent, and then, instead of insisting further, I will make it easy for him to withdraw."

The Emperor once remarked in England towards the very end of his life: "The Ems negotiation was carried on under unfavorable conditions for France. As the affair was not conducted in the ordinary way—diplomats treating with diplomats—but the French diplomats treating with the king direct, there was reason for fearing that it would be more difficult to win against the Prussian statesman than in the case where a negotiation is directed through them by the king. In the Ems instance, there was the danger that a sharp or imprudent word on the part of the ambassador would cause the king to act abruptly at the very beginning of the discussion. In fact, this is just what did happen."

Another difficulty that lay in the way of the happy issue of the Ems interview was the necessity of haste. No time could be lost, lest while the negotiation was going on at Ems, the question would be settled at Madrid. All were terribly nervous at the Tuileries and at Saint Cloud, and the Duc de Gramont naturally shared this nervousness. Thus, deliberation, which is so essential a concomitant of diplomatic action, was absent, most unfortunately,

from these Ems negotiations. And again, the two sides had not the same aim in view. Bismarck wanted war. This is clear from all that has been made public during the past twenty years. All the French official world knew this in that cruel summer of 1870; but now all the world knows it. The French government, on the other hand, though it was bent on obtaining a recognition of its dignity and concessions from the Prussian government, did not desire war and tried to preserve peace. Consequently the Tuileries cabinet was in a markedly inferior position to the Berlin cabinet. Diplomats seeking the appeasement of a difference are faced by obstacles of a varied nature; whereas when war is the aim in view, the task is much simpler. Then "incidents" and the bad side of human nature, all aid in the nefarious purpose. Such were the two rôles in this regrettable Ems affair. Both the Emperor and the Empress felt that and saw the danger and they hoped against hope, till there was nothing left to hope for. Then they tried to accept the inevitable. And yet, I repeat that the Empress has been charged with wishing for that awful war!

Count Benedetti, whose life had been spent in diplomacy and who had seen with his own eyes the gradual development of the military strength of Germany, keenly felt all the difficulties of the part he was about to play. He was to try to soften down the rather arrogant speeches and dispatches of the Duc de Gramont and to do his best to get his country out of an awkward position. Count Benedetti has been judged very unjustly and severely, it has always seemed to me, in his conduct of this Ems affair. I have read all that has been written on the

subject,—both his own defense and the volume of the Duc de Gramont, presenting his side of the controversy. Certain persons talked over the whole subject and entered into all the details thereof, with both the duke and the count; so, while giving here the outlines of the affair, I shall also give their impressions and draw certain conclusions.

The ambassador was received by the king at 3 o'clock, on July 9th. The latter had sent von Werther in the morning to talk over with the count the whole matter so as to know what was the exact desire of our government. "At the beginning of our conversation," Benedetti remarked on one occasion, soon after the events here recounted, "his Majesty appeared very courteous and amiable. But, then, this was his customary habit. I gave him an exact picture of the emotion produced in France by the Hohenzollern candidature and laid before him also the impression made in Europe. I was as persuasive as possible and assured the king that the government of the Emperor had no other aim in view except that of striving to end the incident in an honorable fashion to both parties. I begged the king to push aside whatever should stand in the way and use his powerful influence to decide Prince Leopold to refuse the crown of Spain. 'If your Majesty will do this,' I said most respectfully, 'such a course will immediately restore a calmer feeling throughout Europe and will be welcomed everywhere with gratitude and satisfaction.' The king, who evidently wished to make me feel that he was speaking with perfect frankness, answered: 'I was not ignorant of the negotiations which were being carried on at Madrid. But I have taken no part in them. I did

not wish to check the prince in his own effort to arrive at a final decision. I do not approve of the proposed plan, but I have not forbidden it. In all this, I have acted more as the chief of our family than as a sovereign. I regard this affair as a private matter. I do not think the Prussian government has any more to do with it than any other European government.' I replied that I feared that public opinion would not make such delicate distinctions. His Majesty then avoided the real question at issue by dwelling on the rights of the Spanish nation in this matter of choosing a sovereign. 'The government of the regent is a regular one,' the king went on to say, 'and it is not to be expected that outsiders could modify its decisions. Moreover the Cortes is to meet on the 20th, when final action will be taken.' I replied, recognizing the rights of Spain in the matter; but I added that I was sure that the combination set up by Marshal Prim would be the cause of misfortune to the Iberian peninsula. I continued in these words: "If this candidature could be withdrawn, another solution of the difficulty could be found which would be wholly acceptable to the Spanish nation. Of this I am sure. At the present moment, we would only increase the embarrassments of the regency if we were to turn to it and ask that the veto be given there. This is why we offer your Majesty a strong proof of the sincerity of our feelings by appealing directly to you and begging you to interpose in this affair which affects us very closely and which does not in the least touch the honor of the Prussian monarchy.' The king next complained of the provocative tone of the Duc de Gramont. I answered that the pres-

sure of public opinion in France was the cause of this. His Majesty again stated that he did not wish to use his authority to prevent the prince from accepting the throne. 'You may rest assured, however, that if he should decide to abandon the enterprise, that it is not I who would disapprove of his course. I am now communicating with Prince Anthony on the subject. I have asked him to let me know what are the intentions of himself and his son. I have informed him of the fashion in which the matter is regarded in France. I am now waiting for a reply from Sigmaringen, when we may take up the conversation again.' The interview ended here, but his Majesty kept me to dinner."

When the first official report of this initial interview was received, the Emperor and the Empress both thought it very unfavorable for the cause which they had at heart. The Emperor said: "You notice that the king will make no promises, that he declares Prussia is not responsible for all this and that he declines to counsel the withdrawal of the candidature. This is the shadow. On the bright side, I perceive only his having communicated with Prince Anthony. Now let us see what the reply will be. I am not optimistic." The Duc de Gramont was also disappointed. He was still more impatient to see the end of the affair. He told the Empress that he meant to telegraph Benedetti to make every effort to obtain a decisive reply. "We cannot wait, lest Prussia get ahead of us in her preparations." This did indeed look like war. "The day must not end without a solution," he added, or something to that effect. But there was at least one optimistic personage in the circle. Lord Lyons came in and

said that he had just telegraphed to Lord Granville somewhat as follows: "Gramont authorizes me to tell your lordship that if the Prince of Hohenzollern is willing to withdraw, acting on the advice of the King of Prussia, the whole matter will be at an end." But that was going a little too fast, it appeared to the Empress. She told Lord Lyons so. But he did not agree with her, though the Emperor did. I ought to add that, though the Duke's language was firm, he hoped for and honestly desired a pacific solution of the difficulty.

Meanwhile, the press and public opinion were in a state of great excitement. Fearing that they might be forced by this public opinion to go further than they believed to be safe, the cabinet strove to warn influential papers and leading men of the dangers that might arise from a war with Germany. The Tuileries warmly approved of this course, and, if I am not mistaken, it was the Emperor himself who suggested it. For instance, extracts were published in the ministerial papers from the work of Captain Samuel on the German army, and were preceded by introductory notes like this one, which was drawn up: "At the moment when it looks as though France may be precipitated into a decisive struggle with that great military power known as the Confederation of Northern Germany, we should bear in mind that our future foe is not to be despised and that he has large forces!" At the end of the extracts, this sentence was printed: "The federative army is composed of 906,000 men and 170,000 horses!" This was a wise act on the part of the cabinet. But it bore no fruit; the excitement was too great. The press and a vehement public opinion were leading

in the movement. This should ever be kept in mind by those who wish to judge fairly this stormy moment in our history. France believed in her fighting powers and in her invincibility, while many accepted the view of M. Thiers, who ridiculed the fears of the cabinet. "It is always difficult to check or counterbalance movements due to exalted patriotism," the Emperor wrote in a private letter referring to this moment; "soon this fine but thoughtless and dangerous sentiment got the upper hand of those who were striving to dominate it; and then all was lost. We then had to follow where others led."

In support of what I am saying, I am tempted to give a few extracts from the Paris papers of that moment. It will be seen that even the most republican sheets were pushing the cabinet on towards war, though the anti-Bonapartist writers of the present day pretend that the contrary was true. It is only fair to the Emperor, the Empress and their cause that we show that all the blame should not be laid at their door. Thus, this is what I find in the opposition *Temps*: "If a Prussian prince were to mount the Spanish throne, we should retrograde not only to the time of Henry IV, but even back to the time of Francis I." The *Siècle,* so unfriendly to the Empire, contained this paragraph: "France, surrounded on all her frontiers by Prussia or by nations under the influence of Prussia, would be reduced to a position of isolation similar to that which brought about the long struggle of the old monarchy against the house of Austria. In many respects, the situation would be worse than on the day following the signing of the treaties of 1815." The organ of

Victor Hugo, *Le Rappel,* published these lines over the signature of his son François: "The Hohenzollerns have reached such a point of audacity that they are no longer satisfied with having conquered Germany; they now wish to govern Spain. It will be a lasting humiliation of our epoch that such a project was not only overtaken, but even conceived as possible." Edmond About exclaimed in the *Soir:* "What! Allow Prussia to install a proconsul on our Spanish border? Why we should be 38,000,000 of prisoners, if the news were true. It must be false. It will be false, if we say that it must be. But is the government capable of saying 'must'?" The *Gaulois* said: "It is our opinion that the French government cannot, without betraying France, put up for one day longer with this Prussian business. You may forgive the cabinet for having failed to keep its promises, but you cannot forgive it for not knowing how to remain French."

When the government finally declared, through the Duc de Gramont, that they would oppose the setting up in Spain of a Hohenzollern prince, again the journals of all shades applauded the act. Thus the *Gaulois* said: "The minister has spoken the only language to-day worthy of the country which was listening. If we had borne with the last insult, there would not have been a woman in France who could have given a Frenchman her arm." The *Soir* said: "In France, the first duty of the Opposition is to be in accord with popular opinion. Now, everybody is with the cabinet." The *Universe:* "Last evening, in the clubs and public places, nothing was spoken of but the meeting of the legislative body. The firm language of the government was approved

unanimously and even applauded. In this instance, the ministers were the true organs of public opinion." *L'Opinion Nationale:* "Count von Bismarck has overstepped the limit. If he wishes to maintain peace, he must draw back. As for us, we can do so no longer." The *Correspondant:* "The government yielded to the prevailing current."

Such are fair specimens of the Paris press at this moment. And yet, there are republican writers who have not hesitated to say that the Emperor was not backed by the public in the position which he took. "If we had won in 1870," the Emperor said one day in England, "then these republicans would have said, we were pushed into the war by the Paris mob and the Paris journalists; and they would not have been far wrong."

While negotiations were pending, unfortunately France had to make preparations for war. The Court deeply regretted this, and it quite upset the Emperor to see that this had to be done. If there was anything he disliked, it was doing opposite things at the same moment. He used to say: "It is bad enough having two irons in the fire at the same time. But when the two irons destroy one another, then the thing becomes simply insane." And this was then the case. France wanted peace, —or at least, the Emperor and the Empress did— and yet here they were preparing for war! The Emperor said one day: "You know, I never did care much for Latin. I always, even as a child preferred the sciences—especially mathematics—to *belles lettres.* But if there was a thing that I always detested, it was those Latin adages, which so many people think so fine. I found most of them too

obscure, or equivocal; sometimes, absolutely false. One especially puzzled me,—*Si vis pacem, para bellum.* That is what we are doing to-day, unfortunately. But I never imagined that its truth would come home to me in such a cruel fashion."

Though this activity in the arsenals and navy-yards compromised the peace negotiations, France was forced to this course by what was going on across the Rhine. French agents in Prussia and the other German states kept the government almost hourly informed at the Tuileries and at Saint Cloud as to what was being done to render the already strong German army still stronger. "It is as if a man in armor were to also provide himself with modern pistols and guns," said the Emperor one evening, after reading one of these confidential warnings from Bavaria. But, nevertheless, the State Council, which met on July 11th, decided to delay the order for the beginning of mobilization until the result was known of Benedetti's second interview with the king. All trusted that the altered views of the Spanish government would have much weight with the King of Prussia. In the meanwhile, the Tuileries felt that the main thing to do was to prevent any explosion, an accident, any premature step that would precipitate matters. "I feel as though I was sitting on the top of Vesuvius," said the Emperor one morning as he sat at breakfast.

One of the most likely spots for the eruption was in the legislative body. The left and the right could not keep quiet. "When I was in America or London, I cannot now remember which," said the Emperor to a prominent leader of the legislative body,

who, at this moment, was complaining of the agitation reigning at the Palais Bourbon, "I made the acquaintance of a most original and interesting American named Catlin, who had lived for many years among the Indians. I recollect that he told me that one of the reasons why the red men were so healthy was that they always slept with their mouths shut. In fact years afterwards, he wrote a pamphlet, which I saw on sale in a London book-shop entitled 'Keep your mouth shut.' I have often thought during the past few years of ordering a lot of these pamphlets and having one put on the desk of each deputy! They would be timely just now." The trouble was—and this is almost always the case in France—narrow party considerations cause even the most patriotic Frenchmen to forget broad national interests. This was particularly the case in France at the moment of the fall of the Second Empire, especially during the summer and autumn of 1870. During these critical days of July, the Duc de Gramont did his best to keep the deputies calm. The majority understood the situation and made no useless clamor. But the Right and especially the Left did not always follow this good example. Thus, there happened the unfortunate "Arago incident." The ardent republican deputy, François Arago, "whose greatest distinction was, perhaps, that he was the eldest son of the famous astronomer," as the Emperor maliciously put it, showed himself a regular *enfant terrible.* He rose and asked if the government was really engaged in only demanding the withdrawal of the Hohenzollern candidature and if it was not seizing the opportunity to stir up other subjects of irritation between

France and Prussia. "I was desirous of replying to this base insinuation," said the Duke that same evening to the Emperor and others, "but I feared that this would lead to a general debate which might make matters still worse; so I kept my seat." Thereupon, Arago exclaimed: "The minister's silence may be construed as we think best." These remarks of Arago made a most unfortunate impression abroad, as the government learned almost immediately from various agents at the foreign capitals.

On this same day, Count Benedetti had his second interview with the King of Prussia, who still, as at the first audience, continued to avoid the real issue: "I am obliged to await the news from Sigmaringen," he repeated. Benedetti urged the opposite view, when the king, I am told, grew less amiable, and exclaimed: "Your insistence would almost make one believe that you are trying to force a conflict. I am well aware of the preparations going on in Paris and I admit that we too are taking the measures necessary to prevent our being taken by surprise." "It appeared to me that the king evidently felt that he had gone too far," said Count Benedetti, when he related this interview at a later date. The king then added: "Peace will not be troubled if Paris will be patient, and give me the time to take a certain number of necessary steps. But in the meanwhile, you may telegraph to Paris in my name that I expect to receive a communication from the prince either this evening or to-morrow, for he must have joined his father by this time; and then I will immediately give you a final reply." Commenting on the king's attitude at this second

interview, Count Benedetti later said: "Still clinging to the position assumed from the start, the king evidently wished to throw on the prince all the responsibility of withdrawing from the candidature. It was in this sense that I wrote to the Duc de Gramont. He would not give way to pressure, appearing ready to risk war rather than do so. On the other hand, his sound common sense told him that this Hohenzollern affair was not of a nature to awaken German patriotism. At this moment, therefore, the King of Prussia was unquestionably ready to help towards a peaceful solution of the difficulty, provided, however, this were accomplished by outside means and without his taking any active part therein. He stood ready to accept an accomplished fact—that was all. He was willing to act the part of the head of a family, approving the conduct of a distant relative. On the date of July 11th, the outcome which all the powers hoped for was still possible, for Spain on the one hand, and the Hohenzollern princes on the other, would have been glad to get out of the imbroglio and both desired that peace should be maintained."

These views of Count Benedetti were confirmed from another quarter. The French representative at Madrid sent on word that Marshal Prim was at last fully awake to the danger of this undertaking and had said to him: "Let the prince tell me that obstacles are put in the way of his accepting our offer and I will make it easy for him to back out." Marshal Serrano's words as conveyed to the Tuileries were as follows: "I feel the deepest regret about all this and I heartily wish the matter were

ended. My opinion is that the Paris government should look to Berlin for a solution of the difficulty." In the meanwhile, the Prussian government was advising France to look for a solution to Madrid! France found the Spanish ambassador in Paris also working for peace, and with the head of the Lisbon cabinet, Marshal de Saldanha, was doing his best to revive the Portuguese candidature. On the evening of the 10th, the Spanish cabinet went a step further and sent General Dominguez to Sigmaringen, with instructions to advise Prince Leopold to abandon the plan. This was an excellent idea, but came too late. A friend who saw the Spanish envoy as he passed through Paris told me at the time that, from a conversation with the general, it was evident that the Spanish government was now doing all in its power to remove the danger which was threatening the peace of Europe. M. Stratt, the Roumanian Diplomatic Agent in Paris, also started for Sigmaringen, saying to one of Eugénie's suite before going: "I understand that Prince Anthony is getting very nervous over this whole affair. He writes that he hears of rumors of war from France that Spain no longer cares for his son's candidature, that Prussia herself seems on the point of deserting him and that there is danger that all this may compromise the position of Prince Charles of Roumania. If the family persists in its desire to have another son mount a throne, may they not endanger the throne on the banks of the Danube? And I must say that I share all the misgivings of Prince Anthony; hence my visit to Sigmaringen."

In the meanwhile, the Emperor took many steps of his own to promote the cause of peace, which fact

has not always been sufficiently brought out by the historians of this incident. Thus, I know that the Emperor had the king of the Belgians approached on the subject, and his activity in this direction was continued at other capitals. Nor do I think that King William's conduct of a similar nature has been given in some quarters all the credit that it deserved. Though it may be that he did not wish to appear to Benedetti to be yielding, he was unquestionably taking steps that were equivalent to a partial abandonment of his earlier position. The government learned through the minister to Wurtemberg, Comte de Saint Vallier, that Queen Olga told him that King William had advised Prince Anthony to urge his son to withdraw. We heard, further, that the king had written in the same strain to Queen Augusta. All these various messages gave France fresh hope, and there was good ground for this hope; for, on the morning of July 12th, before General Dominguez had reached his journey's end, Prince Anthony telegraphed to Marshal Prim that, because of the complications arising from his son's acceptance, he had decided to withdraw from the field. Senor Olozaga gave the court the happy news on his way to the Duc de Gramont's, where he found him in conference with von Werther. A few hours later, the Duke told the court that von Werther, among other things, had said: "In all this matter Berlin has not acted with any hostile intentions towards France. We did not think that the Prince's candidature would be badly viewed in France, because he was a relative of the Emperor." "I promptly answered," continued the Duc, "that it was difficult for me to understand how the Berlin

cabinet could take this view of the matter, especially as it was perfectly well known that the Emperor Napoleon had repeatedly said that he preferred a thousand times to see the Duc de Montpensier on the Spanish throne than a foreign prince who might form an alliance with the enemies of France. Von Werther did not reply, and at that moment Olozaga was introduced and handed me the official telegram of Prince Anthony of Hohenzollern to Prim."

This telegram was indeed the withdrawal of the candidature, but without any guarantee, for the future. Furthermore, Prussia had taken no part in the matter, not even in the communication of the withdrawal to the French government, which was handed to de Gramont, as has just been said, by the Spanish ambassador at Paris. All this produced an unpleasant impression. The Duke well said that evening, "As things now stand, we might suddenly learn some fine morning that Prince Leopold had gone secretly to Madrid and was proclaimed king by the Cortes, as was the case formerly with his brother in Roumania. So this Spanish Sigmaringen announcement is not really solid protection against some sly future action. Why, even the prince himself has given no promise, to say nothing of the King of Prussia. I see in all this the tricky hand of Bismarck. I called the attention of von Werther to this and asked him if Prince Leopold withdrew by the advice of the king; whereupon, he very promptly and decidedly informed me that William had nothing whatsoever to do with it."

It has been held that this withdrawal just as it stood was a victory for France and that she should have been contented therewith; but the government

made a mistake in asking for more and that the government is alone to blame for a revival of the conflict with the unfortunate dénouement which followed. But it has always seemed to me that this charge is unjust, and I know that the Emperor, who, by the way, is not responsible for the second phase of the incident—he, like the Empress, would have been willing to stop here, though they fully recognized the force of the arguments against such a course—shared this view of the matter. He and the Empress were of the same mind at the time and they spoke of it on more than one occasion in the years which followed. It is true that the Prussian ambassador sought to attenuate the apprehension occasioned in official circles at Paris at the inadequacy of the withdrawal. What he said on this point to the Duc de Gramont, he repeated to the Emperor and the Empress twice. "The feelings of his Majesty for your Majesties and France," said Baron von Werther, referring to the King of Prussia, "are of the friendliest description. It is his earnest desire to avoid all complications. When he consented to the Hohenzollern candidature, he never imagined that it would be distasteful to France and the Emperor." In these words were all the elements of a peaceful solution of the difficulty, and the Emperor felt that they should be given such a form as to satisfy public opinion and guarantee us against the further scheming of Bismarck. One has no idea to-day how baleful at this moment was the personality of the chancellor. I do not say whether his conduct up to that moment deserved such an arraignment; I am simply stating the way in which he was looked upon by the official

world and the general public at Paris. Without Bismarck, I believe the difficulty would have ended there, and I know this was always the belief of the Emperor.

Before the interview between the Duc de Gramont and Baron von Werther broke up, the former asked the latter to request the King of Prussia to write a personal letter to the Emperor on the subject. At this moment M. Emile Ollivier joined in the conversation, having just come from the legislative body, and he too urged the ambassador to labor in the cause of peace. "The deputies are greatly pleased at the favorable turn which the negotiations have taken," he said, "but I must admit that this first movement has given way to one of anxiety. The Right is restless and the Left is clamoring for explanations; all demand guarantees for the future." The Duc de Gramont again telegraphed to Count Benedetti to endeavor to obtain some such guarantee. But the king would not speak. So it was impossible, because of the restlessness of the deputies, to turn to advantage this unquestionably first success in the negotiations. The Emperor well described the situation when he said: "At this moment, the rôle of the cabinet was very difficult. Any impartial observer must admit this. The government was forced to present a bold front to adversaries from whom we were trying to obtain concessions, who were probably not adverse to a quarrel with us and who were bent on throwing on us the responsibility of a rupture."

While negotiations were being carried on at Ems, French diplomacy was busy at foreign courts. "We must not leave a stone unturned," said the Em-

peror, "in our effort to conjure away this imminent catastrophe." Russia, England, Austria and Italy all did something towards this desired end. But the action of Bavaria was, perhaps, the most significant. Although Bavaria had been a satellite of Prussia since the events of 1866, Count von Bray, minister of Bavarian foreign affairs, did not hesitate to tell the truth at Berlin. He informed the king of Prussia that it was the opinion of Bavaria that "in this matter of the Spanish crown" his majesty should do as did France when the Belgian crown was offered to the Duc de Nemours, and as did England when Prince Alfred was offered the crown of Greece. This was really in another form, the request which Count Benedetti had been so diligently pressing for a week. France gave Bavaria to understand that this proposal, if accepted at Berlin, would be satisfactory to us. The Emperor was very positive on this point and for a moment thought that the Bavarian intervention was going to save the situation. But the Berlin cabinet simply brushed it aside "with a disdain that nearly bordered on contempt," a diplomat said to the Empress.

The Prince of Roumania, brother of Prince Leopold, added his efforts to those of the other rulers. I have already stated that his agent in Paris, M. de Stratt, went on behalf of the Prince of Roumania to Sigmaringen to urge the princes to give up their dangerous enterprise, and he came back to Paris with a letter, which was shown the Empress and the Emperor, from Prince Anthony informing the Spanish government that the candidature had been withdrawn.

Thus all the cabinets recognized as legitimate the French opposition to this Hohenzollern candidature and all agreed that it should be withdrawn. But it was scarcely to be expected that they would go further than this, as each power wished to avoid a rupture with Prussia and to remain on friendly terms with both Prussia and France. Count von Beust was especially nervous, and on July 11th, sent Prince de Metternich a confidential message, which was shown the court. He urged abandoning any thought of war, pointing out things all knew, that the understanding between Vienna and Paris did not require Austria, under present conditions, to coöperate effectually with France against Prussia. The count even criticized the manner in which the negotiations were conducted at Ems. "Our only obligation" said the Austrian foreign minister, "is not to enter into an agreement with any other power, and in this we shall be faithful to our promise." The truth of the matter is that von Beust wished to see how the chances of war were to turn before going as far as he surely meant to go if victory began to perch on French banners. But the early defeats put an end to all hope of aid from Austria. In a word, in order to preserve peace, all the cabinets advised Berlin to abandon the Hohenzollern candidature and not one of them even thought of suggesting to the French government to accept this candidature, which would certainly have been done if there had been the slightest doubt as to its right to object to this candidature. It appears evident to me that consequently the different European governments did not consider that peace was threatened

by exaggerated sensibility at the Tuileries but by the astute conduct of Bismarck.

The closing acts of this Hohenzollern incident are too well known for me to go into them again here. I will, however, state a few facts with which I am acquainted that may add a few new lines to the general picture. For instance, a war-like interpellation of M. Clément Duvernois, always a warm friend of the Emperor, was said to have been authorized by him. But this is not true. The Emperor had absolutely nothing to do with it. As I have already said, all through this terrible affair, he was for peace. He told Count Virmercati so, and on the 12th, he said to the late Count Nigra, then Italian ambassador to Paris: "This news means peace. I asked you to come so that you could telegraph it to the king. I have not had time to write his Majesty. I know that public opinion is in an excited state and the people are crying for war. But this declination of the throne is a satisfactory solution of the difficulty, and removes, at least for the present, all danger of war." Count Nigra has reported this conversation, and I know that it is perfectly exact. The Emperor used these very words. Nor did he speak in this tone to Count Nigra alone. I am also in a position to state that on this same day he said to General Bourbaki: "You need not prepare war materials. This assistance on the part of the Prince of Hohenzollern puts a period to the conflict." And yet it has been said repeatedly both then and since that the Emperor was eager for that war!

At this moment, a conversation which Lord Loftus, the British Ambassador at Berlin, had had with

Bismarck was revealed. The Tuileries was told that Bismarck, when complimented by Lord Loftus on the happy issue of the affair, replied that he very much doubted if this would smooth down the differences between the two countries. He stated that the courteous welcome given by King William to Count Benedetti had produced general indignation throughout Germany and that he had received from several towns expressions of formal disapproval of the conciliatory attitude adopted by his Majesty at Ems. He complained of France's arming, of the strong language used by the Duc de Gramont, and expressed marked personal ill-will for the French ambassador. Even he himself blamed the king's course and finally declared that guarantees must be demanded of France for her future good behavior! This was reversing the rôles with a vengeance!

On July 12th, a council of the ministers was held at Saint Cloud, when the Emperor again had an occasion to display his pacific desires. Opinions were much divided as to the right course to pursue. Some of the ministers thought that guarantees for the future should be demanded from Prussia, while others felt that what had already been obtained was sufficient. This was the wiser plan, as further events showed and this plan was warmly supported by the Emperor. The question was put to the vote and it was decided that the instructions to be given to Count Benedetti should not at all savor of an ultimatum, that the demand for guarantees might be modified and that any honorable compromise would be acceptable. "The Emperor was the soul of the discussion," remarked one of those present.

As pacific conclusions were the result of the discussion, this shows how the Emperor stood. In the *Constitutionnel* next morning—a journal inspired by M. Emile Ollivier,—M. Robert Mitchell wrote: "The Prince of Hohenzollern will not reign in Spain. We ask no more and it is with pleasure that we welcome this peaceful solution, which has cost neither a tear nor a drop of blood." Here again, is revealed the true spirit which prevailed in the immediate court circle at this moment. But I can give still another proof of this. Lord Lyons came and said in the name of the Queen's government, that it was hoped France would accept what had so far been granted and would not broaden the field of conflict. Thereupon, M. Emile Ollivier wrote this letter: "The French cabinet, though instructing its ambassador with the mission of making one last effort with the king, was unanimous in holding that, whatever might be the result of this final request, we would be satisfied with what had been already obtained and drop the matter here."

Unfortunately, the moderation displayed by the government was not imitated by the public and the legislative body. Paris was seething with war rumors. The papers made fun of the telegram of "Papa Anthony." Hopes were expressed that "the patriotism of the deputies would be equal to the occasion." Of course, all this got back to Berlin. At the Palais Bourbon the greatest loquacity prevailed. A friend came over and informed the court that "the deputies of the Extreme Right and the Left rivalled one another in the arrogancy and mockery of their deportment." The Duc de Gramont was assiduously engaged in pouring oil on troubled

waters. He pointed out that the negotiations were not at an end and asked for a short truce. His statement gave rise to a violent debate. Baron Jerome David deprecated strongly the "slow march of diplomacy." There was talk of overthrowing the cabinet. The Emperor, in his despair, said, what was afterwards repeated by Silvella of Spain: "It is easy to govern France; but not with Frenchmen!" The war burst, but not by act of his. "Anyway," said the Emperor truthfully, "my hands are not stained!"

On another occasion the Emperor said: "The news of the candidature of a Hohenzollern prince acted upon France like a spark on inflammable material. It forthwith awakened throughout the country a deep and widespread feeling of hatred, jealousy and suspicion. An incident which, at another time, would have been left wholly to the care of the diplomats, now shook the entire nation. I felt then and my mind has never changed on this point, that the ministry made a grave mistake in pronouncing in the tribune a sort of challenge which rendered still more difficult the action of our diplomats. Nevertheless, when we learned that the head of the family had withdrawn the candidature of his son, we hoped that peace might be preserved. But public opinion throughout the land was in such an excited state that all efforts towards a conciliatory issue from the difficulty were received with disapproval by the masses. Almost every newspaper clamored for war. The provinces echoed the cry of 'On to Berlin' which resounded in the streets of the capital. The legislative body voted for war 247 to 10. As M. Thiers has well said, 'the deepest

emotion took possession of the nation.' I was most vehemently cheered every time I showed myself in public. If I did not cross Paris when I started for the army, it was because everybody was so excited that we feared the popular demonstration might be too intense. Every soldier who appeared in the street was the object of an ovation. In the theaters, the enthusiasm was intense. It cannot be forgotten that one evening at the opera house, the whole audience sprang to its feet and sang the 'Marseillaise' in chorus. This delirium for war was only equalled by the enthusiasm for the dynasty. This last statement cannot be questioned by impartial witnesses of what occurred at this moment.

"Up to the very last, the ministry, and I especially, thought that peace would not be broken. On Sunday, July 19th, I went from Saint Cloud to the Tuileries to hold a ministerial council, which lasted several hours. After long deliberation, I and all the ministers were of one mind that declaration of a pacific character should be made public. But at that moment came the famous, perhaps I might be excused if I say, the infamous, Ems telegram, cunningly manipulated by Count Bismarck so as to appear as if our ambassador had been rudely received by King William. This falsehood had the hoped for result. Those who now are only too prone to accuse me of weakly bending to the storm and plunging headlong into a war, were then the most ungoverned in their delirium and the most eager to throw up in our faces the accusation of cowardice. The enthusiasm of the people, the current of public opinion, the spirit which animated the legislative body, and the vociferations of the press should be

borne in mind if we are to judge rightly this crisis. So, after the Ems telegram and in the midst of such popular demands, the ministers went to Saint Cloud in the evening and reversed the decision arrived at in the morning. M. Emile Ollivier informed me that if the declaration which had at first been decided upon had been made public, the general disappointment would have been so great that the ministers on their way to Saint Cloud would have been received with shouts of disapproval and their carriages pelted with showers of stones!"

In the midst of all these events, the Empress was in the deepest perplexity. Though it has been declared and often repeated that she was in favor of the war of 1870, there is not a word of truth in this assertion. Though the Empress has been blamed as the responsible agent in this calamity, she never desired this war. Eugénie easily guessed what complications would arise therefrom and she knew that the Emperor was tired and weary, perhaps ill, though at that time she was not informed of the serious results of the medical examination made by Dr. Sée, which showed that the Emperor was afflicted with gravel. At the meeting of the ministers, the Empress strove to show the courage expected of a sovereign in such a great crisis and she did not hide a feeling of wounded pride at the provocations which came from Berlin. In fact, she finally accepted with the nation, the cabinet and the imperial circle, the view that war was inevitable, necessary even; but to assert that Eugénie desired it or that she did aught to bring it about, is absolutely untrue, there being no solid fact on which to base such a cruel and false assertion. The Empress even

did not share the Duc de Gramont's opinions as to the country's strength, nor those of Marshal Leboeuf concerning the state of the army. Her thoughts at this moment were rather on her son whom it was proposed to take with the army, in case of an outbreak of hostilities; on the difficulties which would forthwith assail the Emperor, and on the grave responsibilities which would be hers as regent. These considerations in themselves would have sufficed to restrain anybody in sane mind from rushing to such a conflict, to say nothing of working to bring it about. Eugénie thrust aside the specter as long as it was possible to do so, and when circumstances forced her to accept the situation, she strove to bear her part with what courage she possessed. It has been further said that Eugénie might have prevented the Emperor from going to war; that her power over him was very great and that she made no effort to persuade him to abandon such a dangerous course. The truth is that matters moved so rapidly at the end and the Ems telegram so complicated the situation, that neither the Empress nor anybody else could have prevented what happened. In a word, Prussia had found a means of insulting France and of forcing the French nation to rush to the battle field.

Before leaving this disagreeable subject, I must refute a special charge in this connection. It has been repeatedly said that, once speaking of the Franco-Prussian conflict, the Empress lightly declared: "It is my war!" Eugénie never uttered these words. But to substantiate this declaration, I have thought best, in these memoirs, to bring to-

gether here further proofs of this fact, which is done in the following paragraphs.

M. Emile Ollivier, once wrote a letter to Dr. Cabanès editor of the *Chronique Médicale,* a highly respectable French medical journal, in which letter this matter is completely disposed of. The extracts which follow are taken from the original form of this letter, which differs slightly from that in which it was printed by Dr. Cabanès. M. Ollivier makes these separate points:

"1. In 1870, the Emperor was suffering from gravel to such a degree that his physical, intellectual and even moral activities were quite paralyzed; which sufficiently explains our reverses at the beginning of the campaign.

"2. The Empress never said the words attributed to her, viz: 'This war is my war!' "

M. Alfred Duquet, the author of able military works concerning the war of 1870, says on this point: "The famous sentence attributed to the Empress has been repeated again and again, printed numerous times and cursed by mothers and all sensible Frenchmen. But was it ever uttered? I do not hesitate to answer quite decidedly No. In doing so, I am not influenced by any sympathy for the Empire, for the truth is I always disliked the régime. I never hide the truth, even when it works against my own interests, my own desires. I must confess that I have never laid eyes on a valid written or oral proof that such an abominable speech was ever made."

The son of a distinguished general of the Second Empire, who frequently saw the Empress during the closing years of her life, says in a private letter:

"That so-called historical exclamation was invented after the event, as frequently happens. The Empress repeatedly denied the authenticity of it both in my presence and in presence of others. Nobody in her immediate circle ever believed a word in it, much less heard her pronounce it."

M. Tachard, who was a republican deputy in the legislative body of the second empire and later representative in Brussels of the Government of national defense, has said: "I have always held that this assertion concerning the Empress and the war was false. When I saw her at Cap Martin in 1904 she again declared that she had never been in favor of the conflict of 1870. She went on to say: 'I am quite ready to assume the responsibility of all my acts. I admit that I exerted my influence in favor of the unfortunate Mexican expedition, but I stoutly deny that I ever approved of the struggle between Germany and France. Quite the contrary, I did what I could to prevent it. I authorize you to declare this in public where and when you see fit.' One of the great sorrows of the Empress is to see with what tenacity this legend has fixed itself in the public mind and how impossible its uprooting has been."

Still another point in connection with this unfortunate conflict calls for a few words. It has been asserted that the Emperor had the power to prevent the war if he had chosen to do so. On this question he has left this note: "There is no doubt that, though the head of the French government was then only a constitutional sovereign, he could have averted the disaster of 1870. But, it should be remembered that if he had done so, he would have lost

all popularity and been generally blamed for such a course. He would have been told that he was humble with the strong and arrogant with the weak. Such charges had already been made. His conduct would have been denounced on all hands. He would have been accused of culpable condescension towards the foreigner and his action would have furnished an inexhaustible fund of material to the Opposition. But I am ready to admit that if I had performed my whole duty, I should have been wiser than the nation, and should have prevented the war even if I had, by so doing, lost my crown. I may say in palliation, that I accepted the struggle thrust upon us without ardor, as a man goes to the field of the duello because it is demanded by the rules of honor, not asking whether his adversary is stronger than himself. I also was carried away by the national outburst, by my great confidence in the strength of the army, perhaps, to, to be perfectly frank by dreams of military glory, while visions of territorial aggrandizement may have got the better for the moment of the cool reasoning of the statesman and sovereign. But if I make this confession, it does not follow that I in any respect accept the view which M. Jules Favre has seen fit to advance, that I undertook this war willingly and for dynastic reasons. Can any sensible person believe that, two months after a popular vote had once more confirmed the former plebiscitums and prove to the most incredulous how deep-rooted was the Empire in France, I would have thought it necessary to have recourse to such a terrible and uncertain expedient as a great European struggle to sustain my power and secure a new lease of popularity for the dynasty.

A successful war could not have made the Second Empire more solid at home, and if it turned out to be a disaster, as unfortunately was the case, it could only overturn everything. The war also meant my leaving France with the best of my army, the Empress and the Prince Imperial remaining behind; for, though the latter did at first accompany me to the front, it was never my intention to keep him there very long. It meant no reliable chief in Paris and no forces of importance in a great and restless capital, where republican ideas had their home, where was an almost free press and where public meetings could be held at will. To make war under such circumstances, unless forced to it, was the act of a madman.

"We furthermore felt that at the slightest reverse—and reverses, even in a successful war, are very probable—there was the risk of disturbances at Paris, ending, it might be in a revolution. It is evident, therefore, that this war was, from every point of view, contrary to the best interests of the throne and the dynasty. M. Jules Favre has always held that the system of ministerial responsibility is an admirable form of government. Why then does he lay all the blame of this war on me alone? Should not, in his eyes, the ministers at least share the blame with me? But the truth is that the whole country asked for this war and I could not resist the current. This is the real fact that the future historian will surely set forth and set forth clearly. In my proclamation to the French nation on the eve of the conflict, I did not hesitate to declare that it was the nation's war, and nobody then contradicted me. I said on this solemn occasion: 'There are in

the lives of peoples solemn moments when national honor, violently awakened, becomes irresistible, rises above every other interest and takes charge of the nation's destinies. One of these decisive hours has struck for France. In answer to Prussia's latest claims, we offered our objections, and they were disdainfully set aside. The country has been deeply wounded thereby, and a cry for war has been raised from one end of France to the other. Now we have only to trust to our arms.' And when, on July 23rd, the legislative body came to bid farewell to me, I replied to the President's speech in these words: 'We have done all in our power to avoid war and I can truly say that it is the nation which, by its irresistible outburst of popular feeling, has decided what we should do under these solemn circumstances.' While I do not wish to shirk my share of the responsibilities which fall to me, I, before as after the defeat, wish simply to establish clearly in the eyes of the world, that I did not lead the country into a perilous enterprise for any petty dynastic motives, but that I was warmly encouraged, if not actually forced, to undertake the war of 1870 by the outspoken demands of French public opinion repeatedly and very openly expressed.''

On the eve of the outbreak, the emperor made a strenuous effort to bring about as close an alliance as possible between France and Austria. In March, Archduke Albert, who was considered one of the best generals of the day—his defeat of Victor Emmanuel at Custozza, in 1866, still being fresh in the public mind—came to Paris, where he was warmly welcomed both by the court and the French military leaders. The Archduke was received several times

by the Emperor and the question of an alliance between the two countries was discussed at those meetings. The Empress had in her possession this minute on these negotiations: "The Emperor and Albert outlined a general plan of campaign in case war should break out between France and Prussia. We do not desire a war, but the preparations being made on the other side of the Rhine cause us some anxiety. In any case, it has been agreed that the Archduke on his return to Vienna, will speak with the Emperor Francis Joseph on the subject and if necessary an ambassador ad hoc will leave Paris for the Austrian capital. Later, on May 19th, Napoleon had consulted with him a half dozen of the chief generals of the war department and laid before them the plan which had been submitted by Albert, in accordance with which a French army was to join the Austrians in Bavaria, while Italy would send an army beyond the Tyrol. The Archduke counts on an uprising in Hanover and the South German states, and he even believes that Denmark will join in the war, if one comes about, which I most sincerely trust will not be the case. But all think the weak side of the plan to be the condition laid down by Austria that she must have six weeks to prepare from the moment the war breaks out. The Emperor and the generals do not hide their anxiety as to whether the French armies could hold out alone for so long a time."

It was believed later, if not at that time, that France's so-called ally was eager to reap any advantage which might come from the war, but was less anxious to share in the dangers of our hoped-for victories! But the Emperor was determined to

sift the matter to the bottom, and so sent, as was agreed, a special envoy to Vienna, General Lebrun, who bore with him an autograph letter of Napoleon III to the Emperor Francis Joseph. I have this memorandum of the general concerning this important mission:

"My instructions were to draw up in writing and have signed the military agreement made in Paris between the Emperor and the Archduke Albert. I was to insist upon the importance of Austria entering upon the campaign without any delay, as she proposed. I was to point out the danger and the inconvenience of this six weeks' time for mobilization. I started for Vienna on May 28th, but did not go straight through, as I did not wish to arouse suspicion and wanted, at the same time, to get as much knowledge as possible of the situation in Germany. So I did not reach the Austrian capital till June 6th and on the following day I was received by the Archduke Albert. But there was nothing encouraging in our conversation. The Archduke would make no promises, and said that when he took up the military question, it was simply from a theoretical standpoint. 'Austria cannot promise what she cannot do,' he said. There was nothing definite in anything he said. He avoided all political subjects, confining his conversation entirely to military matters. He laid stress on the slowness of mobilization in Austria and declared it would be impossible to abandon his demand for the six weeks of grace. We had three different conversations, but in all of them, the prince was communicative only in the matter of strategical advice, dwelling particularly on the propitious moment for beginning a cam-

paign, if one became necessary, as he believed would be the case. 'Prussia has this idea firmly fixed in her head,' he said, 'but she will choose her hour.' However, to all my proposals of a really practical nature, the prince opposed a *non possumus*. I did not expect, I must confess, such an unbending attitude, and I came away convinced for my part, that Austria was adopting this policy of delay in order first to see what turn events took and to come out openly and squarely on our side, only in case she saw victory perching on our banners.

"I was received by the Emperor Francis Joseph on June 16th, at the castle of Luxemburg. The Emperor was very cordial in manner, but very reserved whenever I touched upon the question that had really brought me to Vienna. He said, among other things: "I wish it to be especially clear that I disapprove of any act which might be taken *ab irato*. I desire peace and shall go to war only if I am forced to. I take the same view of the matter as that expressed to you by the Archduke Albert. We must, above all, have the six weeks' delay. It would be impossible for me to begin hostilities, if any in fact were begun, at the same time as his Majesty Napoleon III. If I did otherwise, Prussia would work up against us German opinion not only in the south but even in the Austro-Hungarian empire itself, and my government would find itself in a very embarrassed position.' In the course of this conversation, the Emperor Francis Joseph stated the only hypothesis in which, it seemed to him, he could join forces with France. He said on this point: 'If the Emperor Napoleon, forced to accept or to declare war, threw himself with his armies into the south of Germany,

not as an enemy but as a liberator, I would find myself obliged to unite my fate to his. Under these circumstances, I could not, in the eyes of my peoples, do otherwise than join my troops to his. This is what I wish you would say to the Emperor Napoleon III.'

"I now found myself on very delicate ground. My instructions were to consider only the military question, and I was now brought face to face with the strategical coöperation of the two armies before it was decided under what circumstances and in what eventualities they were to be united. Not feeling authorized to ask for more definite explanations on this head, I replied to the Emperor, as follows: 'The very aim that the Emperor Napoleon had in view was to establish in advance some understanding, so that in case of war, the armies might not be taken by surprise when in the act of mobilization.' But the Emperor Francis Joseph again confined himself to mere generalities and finally let me see that he considered the audience at an end, this being done in a most polite and cordial manner."

The mission had settled nothing definite, and this was admitted in the very detailed report which General Lebrun handed to the emperor on his return, the gist of which is given in the foregoing shorter memorandum.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CAMP AT CHALONS, IN 1870

After the disasters around Metz, the Emperor Napoleon left the army on August 16th, at four o'clock in the morning. The troops had just crossed the Moselle and were striking their tents in order to continue their retreat. The imperial carriages reached Verdun during the day. But the Emperor found no news awaiting him there from Marshal Bazaine. "I supposed," says Napoleon in some manuscript notes on the war, "that the maneuvers which had been decided upon before I left Metz were being carried out. After giving orders for the re-victualling of the army, I continued my route towards Chalons, where I arrived, with a few officers of my military household, in a third-class railway compartment. This sorry conveyance did not bear much resemblance to the 'luxurious equipages,' which I have been accused of using and which, it was said, 'cumbered the road and hindered the movements of the troops.' I noticed much disorder and considerable confusion in the neighborhood of Mourmelon. Utensils and provisions were heaped up there in view of the formation at that point of a large army. But the various services were unable to cope with such a large undertaking. Trains were coming and going incessantly, and fresh troops from the depots were continually arriving, with regiments

of the 12th corps and fragments escaped from the disaster of Reichshoffen. Marshal MacMahon's unfortunate soldiers were tired and ill, and presented a pitiful sight, which filled my heart with sorrow. We felt very anxious over the sad plight of MacMahon's men and were more nervous still over the situation at Metz. After heroic but fruitless efforts, Bazaine's march had been stopped, as I soon learned, and it now appeared impossible that the two armies could join hands. It looked more and more probable that the Chalons army was to find itself alone in the face of the Prussian mass. As soon as I reached Chalons, I fully realized the failure of the plan on which I had so hopefully counted.

"At Chalons, too, I got bad news from Paris. My information read as follows: 'The government of the Empress-Regent is painfully struggling against the difficulties of a vast administrative task. The Opposition is daily becoming more seditious and dangerous. The people are agitated and laboring under great excitement; they are being worked into a state of effervescence by unscrupulous conspirators who have but one aim in view,—to take advantage of the confused situation in order to advance their own interests. So far, we have kept in restraint the revolutionary groups, in spite of their continual efforts to make mischief. But such dangerous agitators as Flourens and his friends are lifting their heads again and taking new heart over the news of our disasters at the front. There is a strong bond of union between the radical left, the extreme organs of the press and the workingman's International. The headquarters of the movement is in the Rue de la Sourdière, in a house which has long

served as a meeting place of the republican Opposition. We know the spot well and it is being carefully shadowed. These malcontents hesitate to act. Most of them are aware that they are known to our police and are watched. They dare not as yet attack us openly, for they can well believe that we will not spare them. But how much longer will they remain in this quiescent state? This is the question that worries us the most. Your Majesty should also know that on August 9th, when the chambers met, a first attempt to create disorder was tried. On the 14th, the agitators grew bolder. Eudes and his friends attacked the barracks at La Villette and the corporal on duty and a young girl were killed in the fray. These are of course mere skirmishes. The enemies of order and of the Empire build all their hopes on Prussian victories; that is where they expect to get solid support; they are already hurrahing over the first successes of von Moltke!' "

The Emperor's notes continue at this point: "A crisis seemed imminent. The resources at the disposal of the Regent were very small, for almost all the good troops had been sent to the front. 'Prompt and firm decisions,' the Empress wrote me very truly, 'absolute, energetic and disciplined coöperation of all office-holders, from the top to the bottom of the official ladder,—this is our chief means of defense.' But in times of great public peril, it is much more difficult and hazardous to secure perfect regularity in the working of the various government services, unless there be an all-powerful and very strong hand at the helm. Though the Empress showed the most admirable energy, the min-

istry of August 10th, appointed under painful circumstances, after our first defeats, was not in this respect, up to the mark. I hasten to add that the ministers were loyal and devoted men, each one possessing marked individual capacity, but without popularity or any influence on the country at large. In fact, the Empress stood rather alone, in the midst of snares and difficulties of all sorts. Her patriotism, the courage which she had shown on many occasions and the popularity which she had enjoyed in happier days, did not suffice in those stormy moments to act as a very strong bulwark in defense of the sadly menaced throne. She knew the changing French spirit, the lack of stability among the people when the wind veered. She felt that, belonging to no ruling family, and the wife of a sovereign who had been elected by the nation and had not been put on the throne by ancient tradition, she could not hope to count on those dynastic attachments which are so valuable in hours of danger. The France of to-day is not like Austria or Spain, where old and chivalrous sentiments gather all the closer round the throne, especially if occupied by a woman. I was ill, overcome by disease at times, defeated at the very beginning of the campaign in a war which had been forced upon us and which at that moment was drawing down on our heads anathemas and reproaches. There was not a single first-rate statesman near the Empress. Those who had helped to build up the Empire, like Morny, Billault, Pélissier and St. Arnaud were dead, or had withdrawn from active life; like Persigny and Boitelle, while Rouher, President of the Senate, might give useful advice, but the Legisla-

tive Body would not have been inclined to permit his return to real power, and Emile Ollivier, to whom was wrongly imputed the responsibility for the declaration of war, could not well be consulted since he had been roughly pushed from office. Such was the state of 'the pillars of the Empire' at this critical hour.

"M. Emile Ollivier, by the way, was one of those who was loudest in demanding that I return to Paris. He said repeatedly to the Empress: 'The presence of the Emperor at the capital at this moment is absolutely necessary. After Moscow, after Waterloo, Napoleon I had not hesitated, under similar circumstances, to leave the army in order to return to Paris, give confidence to the public and lay at rest all idea of sedition. Napoleon III should follow the excellent example set by his great uncle. His presence can alone give the necessary impulse to the wheels of government. His authority can alone strengthen the weak-hearted, restrain the ambitious and bring calm on every hand.' I fully realized the whole meaning of this new call made upon me and which was so well summed up by M. Ollivier. When the retreat of the Metz army was first decided upon, my own mind was made up to return straight to the capital. The subject was taken up at Chalons and long discussed. The move was finally condemned and I reluctantly bowed assent."

A close friend of mine has left the following memorandum on this point: "The day after the Emperor's arrival at Chalons, Generals Trochu, Schmidt and Berthaut met at the quarters of Prince Napoleon. It is notorious that though this prince

had remarkable intelligence, it was often very ill-directed. He always had a tendency to draw near to the men who blamed the policy of the Empire, and his affinities were numerous with General Trochu, a hypercritical and dissatisfied man. Both had condemned the war, both were opposed to the regency of the Empress and both desired to annihilate, in so far as possible, her influence. So when, after consulting together on this occasion at Chalons, they proceeded to the Imperial quarters, they were agreed as to the principal steps which should be counseled and supported. The day before, the Prince had held that Napoleon's return to Paris was impossible of execution, and had told General Schmidt as much. But now he favored the plan of bringing the sovereign to the capital, but under cover of General Trochu's popularity. It was also understood that Trochu was to be made governor of Paris.

"The Emperor was suffering greatly that day. Nevertheless, he received the generals very kindly in front of his tent, and a long conversation ensued regarding the state of the army. All were of the same mind that it was impossible to remain longer in a camp which offered no means of defense, especially as the condition of the troops themselves was not satisfactory. General Berthaut, who commanded the eighteen battalions of the Mobile Guards of the Seine, said: 'My men are neither fully equipped nor armed, nor sufficiently drilled to be any good in the open, though they can be relied upon if placed behind fortifications.' Then General Trochu added: 'Why not send these Mobiles back to Paris, where they can be utilized? To my

mind, these young men will fight much better if they are stimulated by the thought that they are defending their homes. This is their right and duty.' The two generals insisted so strongly on this measure that it was then and there decided to send back these Mobiles to the capital. But before this was finally settled, it was suggested that the battalions from Belleville and Montmartre who of course were not over friendly to the régime, now that they were out of the city, be kept out and be sent north. But it was feared that this exceptional measure would offend the suburbs and do more harm than good; and so the order was given General Berthaut to take all of his Mobiles back.

"Then Prince Napoleon brought the conversation round to the situation at Paris, and said on that burning topic: 'At this critical juncture, I think that the Empire should lean not on the ministers and the statesmen whom public opinion holds responsible for the war, but on the liberal party, on those who are in accord with this public opinion, without any regard to what were the past acts or ideas of these persons.' General Schmidt, chief of General Trochu's staff, and his intimate friend, supported the Prince's views in these words: 'The situation is very serious. I think it my duty to assure your Majesty that to my mind, at this present juncture—August 17th—our only salvation lies in hastening to Paris, which I have just passed through. I hear it said that your Majesty has not made use of General Trochu because he is thought to have a leaning towards the Opposition. Sire, my opinion is that your Majesty should return to Paris and name General Trochu governor of the town.

Your present situation cannot last,—you are not on your throne!' 'Quite true,' remarked the Emperor, 'it looks as though I had abdicated.' ''

Prince Napoleon has left this note: ''I pointed out to the Emperor the odd position which he then occupied, being neither the head of the government nor the head of the army. I warmly praised General Trochu, who had opposed this war as he had opposed all the other wars of the Second Empire. He had urged the reorganization of the army before indulging in campaigns; and because of this good advice, he had been looked upon with suspicion. But at present, he could exercise great authority, and he is unquestionably very popular. 'Let him put these advantages at your service,' I said, addressing myself directly to the Emperor, 'like the brave man that he is but whom you have misjudged. Appoint him governor of Paris. Intrust him with the defense of the town. Send him on a few hours in advance of you. Let him announce to the inhabitants in a proclamation which he will draw up, your arrival among them. You will find that all will go well.' I could see that the Emperor was somewhat taken aback by such a sudden proposal. He turned to enter his tent, motioning to MacMahon, who had just come up, to follow him. He said to the Marshal that he wished to speak with him, and when they were alone, except for me, the Emperor asked MacMahon point blank if General Trochu could be trusted. The Marshal said he could. Thereupon the Emperor came out to General Trochu and asked him whether he would accept the mission proposed by me. Trochu said in reply: 'A grave injustice has been done

me by throwing doubt on my loyalty. I deserve the trust which your Majesty is putting in me, and I promise your Majesty that if made governor of Paris, I will furnish convincing proofs of my devotion to the cause.' Thereupon the Emperor made the nomination and the meeting broke up.''

A member of the Empress' circle gives this excellent and unpublished estimate of General Trochu: ''No one can question his merits in technical matters, his large fund of general information, his historical and military learning. These were only surpassed, alas! by his facile speech, that eloquence of tongue and pen which he was to abuse so greatly. He would covet posts held by fellow-officers—posts which he had refused when first offered to him. His hobby was 'reforming'; he wished to reform everything, and to reform continuously. 'I should like to redress that error,' he would frequently say. He was very liberal in politics, and had no very strong friendship for the Empire, of which, however, he had no good ground to complain. He often posed as a 'victim of this bad régime' as he liked to say. His bitterness towards the government was overlooked on account of his many merits and the good he might do. None of us doubted his loyalty when he accepted the mission intrusted to him on August 19, 1870. It was supposed that his dreams of ambition were at length satisfied, Prince Napoleon, the generals who counted greatly on his popularity, Napoleon himself who held in check his mistrust of Trochu,—none of us who were present on that memorable occasion ever imagined that he would so soon forsake his duty and forget what he was in honor bound to observe, in order to play a self-

ish and political part which must be condemned by every fair-minded student of the facts in the case. 'General Trochu was a grumbler,' Napoleon III once said of him; 'and yet it must not be thought that he had been thrust into the shade during the Empire. On the contrary, I had given him several positions of trust.' After the coup d'état, when the army was asked to give its opinion of the new form of government, Major Trochu wrote these words on his ballot: 'I vote No because it is my duty to do so.' When the Emperor was told of this incident, years afterwards, he remarked: 'Trochu was always fond of phrases.' Some weeks later, when the Empire was well under way, Marshal de Saint Arnaud offered him the position of assistant chief of staff at the War Office,—a post of high trust and very tempting to a young officer whose military services and recognized worth were the causes of the offer being made. Declining the appointment, the major wrote to his chief: 'If I accepted, I should compromise your position; my situation is too delicate.' 'Again, phrases,' comments the Emperor; 'if he had said his health was delicate, he would have been nearer the truth.' 'But I wanted that officer,' said to me on one occasion Saint Arnaud, 'and I would not take No for an answer. Of course there were many able officers who would have jumped at this chance. But it was Trochu whom I wanted, in which matter I was simply following also the wishes of the Emperor. So I again offered him the post. He still hesitated; whereupon I took the bull by the horns and ordered him to assume his duties at the War Office. The young officer obeyed, entered immediately upon his duties, showed him-

self to be "the right man in the right place," and collaborated with unquestioned zeal in all the acts of my administration. I became all the more attached to him by the very fact that I had been forced to conquer him. In 1854, I took the newly made colonel as my aide-de-camp to the Crimean War, where he played an active part in the organization of the army and spared neither pains nor labor in his work. He grew in my estimation as the war progressed, and after the battle of the Alma, where he won the grade of brigadier general, there was some talk of making him the chief of staff of the French army. But he declined this honor in a way quite creditable to himself, on the ground that he would not take from General de Martinprey a post which he had grown up to.'

"Trochu was wounded at the attack on Malakoff and was sent back to France, where he was offered the command of the infantry staff. As usual he refused, basing his refusal on the fact that his ideas were not in accord with those of the Emperor in the matter of army reorganization. The Emperor has made this comment on this act: 'Here on the contrary, was Trochu's opportunity to assert his ideas. But his first impulse was always to imagine that he was being ensnared. If we offered him some post, he thought it was done because it was a bad post, one where he would risk losing his renown. He was always over-anxious to assert his independence. You cannot, by the way, have a very high idea of Trochu's generosity of character if you read his "Notes on the Crimean Campaign." For all these reasons, and for others besides, I was not so eager as were others to give him an important post

at the moment of our disasters. And I saw later, that I had had good ground for holding this opinion of him.'

"During the Italian war, his division fought brilliantly under the orders of Canrobert, especially at Solferino, and a year later, on account of his superior qualities as revealed in this Italian campaign, he was offered the command of the expedition to China. But here he again refused the proffered honor, and it went to General de Montauban, who became later Comte Palikao. So Trochu thus lost being made a noble, which would have greatly tickled his vanity. He based his refusal on his wish to devote himself to 'the interesting work at the War Office' but wrote to a friend, who later showed me the letter: 'They wish to get rid of me; but I must not go, for suppose that something should occur in Europe while I am so far away!' 'What did he mean by this "something"?' the Emperor well asked me much later.

"From 1859 to 1867, Trochu filled the much coveted post of inspector of infantry and member of the staff committee. He might have been a senator and an aide-de-camp of the Emperor. 'But he was always sulking,' says Napoleon III. Yet the Emperor's kindness to him was very great. He had heavy domestic responsibilities, for, after the death of his brother, who left eleven children, he had come to their aid. Thereupon the Emperor sent a handsome sum of money to the widow, which, however, the general declined in his sister-in-law's name, though she and the children were provided for at the public expense in another manner more in accord with the general's wishes. In 1867, he

published a pamphlet on the army which awakened wide comment. He criticized everything, but did not offer any real remedy for all the evils which he discovered. But he was very well received at Compiègne, where he came that year, contrary to his usual habit and he was made a member of the commission formed to examine and draft the new laws proposed by the Emperor and Marshal Niel, the then minister of war, concerning the reorganization of the army. The commanderships of the corps were so distributed in July, 1870, that he was left unprovided for, which greatly ruffled him. But he was made member of the council of the minister of war, a most important post at that moment."

Such is a brief sketch of this leading actor on the scene in the early stages of the "Terrible Year." I have devoted considerable space to him for the reason that he was one of the severest critics of the Second Empire, and I wish posterity to get some idea of just what these critics were. *Ex uno, disce omnes.* In a later chapter, the reader will see, in other parts of these memoirs, how discreditably General Trochu played his part in this crisis, one of the worst France has ever known.

CHAPTER IX

THE SEDAN TRAGEDY

This chapter is based on the Empress' own personal recollections and on those of many of her circle, on unpublished letters, on various memoranda and on conversations with several actors in the tragic scenes here described. Though much has been written and printed concerning the catastrophe of Sedan, it is believed that the following pages contain many minor facts and side-lights that will be welcomed by the students of this disastrous episode in the last days of the Second Empire.

An aide-de-camp of the Emperor has left this hitherto unpublished note: "Technical considerations caused Marshal MacMahon to hesitate between the march on Carignan and retreat on Mézières. The army concentrated around Sedan was forced to maneuver on a narrow space, for, the enemy, occupying the left bank of the Meuse, carefully guarded all the openings into the interior of France. The only way to withdraw from this difficult position was by the road to Carignan on the east, that of Bouillon, Belgium, on the north, and that of Mézières, on the west. The Marshal spent the whole of August 31, rallying and resting his troops, and put off a final decision until the morrow. But one thing all were even then agreed upon,—it was impossible to withdraw to neutral ground, to Belgium,

without first fighting. The army ranged round Sedan, on the hills which encircle the town. Measures had been taken to parry any sudden attack. The chief occupation of the moment was the revictualling of the troops, especially as it was evident that the food supply could not last long, for, a few Prussian shells having exploded in the railway station, the station-master had taken fright and sent the convoys forward to Mézières, without orders. A company of engineers, who were to have blown up the bridge at Donchery, was also carried beyond its destination by the same train, and the soldiers having been finally put down, the locomotive was started again, carrying away with it the powder supply! All of these mistakes helped to invite the Prussian attack; but still the Marshal hesitated. In the meanwhile, the Prussians had decided on their plan of action. Von Moltke was now certain that the French army could not move towards Metz and he quickly decided to cut off our retreat in the direction of Belgium and Mézières and thus force us back under the walls of Metz, and they would fall on us before we could hope to save ourselves. So the battle commenced shortly before daybreak, towards Bazeilles, the Bavarians being the first to attack us. It was impossible to refuse to fight. Flight was unworthy of the French army. In fact, flight, in the case of a demoralized army surrounded by enemies, was not prudent."

General de Wimpffen says in a manuscript note, parts of which have appeared in his pamphlet, published later: "The army, occupying unfavorable positions and surrounded by the enemy, could only be beaten. The sole thing we could do, both for

the honor of the army and the country, was to render our defeat as difficult as possible. Our tired troops, worn out by marches, lack of sleep and food, were rapidly losing courage. All felt in honor bound to accept battle, however great our disadvantages both as to numbers and position; and thus Marshal MacMahon fought the battle of Sedan as are fought all forlorn hopes,—the men did not fight to conquer but to die with honor. The Marshal may have been guilty of many errors by his hesitations, his marches and counter-marches, but he cannot be blamed for having fought a battle which he could not refuse. He was thrown from his horse about seven o'clock by the bursting of a shell which struck his hip. Forced to leave the field of battle, he sent word to General Ducrot to take command of the army. Well might the Marshal bless the wound which allowed him to remain a stranger to the end of that terrible struggle and relieved him from having to sign the capitulation which followed. Meanwhile, the Emperor mounted his horse and remained on its back almost the whole day, although he was suffering excruciating pain. He rode to the heights where the batteries were in full view of the enemy, whose attention was attracted by the group of officers surrounding the sovereign. They were made a target for numerous shot and shell. But not wishing to expose his escort to unnecessary danger, the Emperor left the greater number of his officers near Belan, where they were shelterd by a wall. He then rode, accompanied by four officers, to the crests of the hills, which he climbed, now on foot, now on his horse, the bombs, in the meanwhile falling on all sides of him. Reaching the top, there

he stood impassible, seemingly inviting death in the midst of his brave soldiers. In the meantime, General Ducrot had unhesitatingly accepted the chief command of the unfortunate army. He considered the position at Sedan very dangerous. I understand that, the day before, he had studied the measures which might be taken to enable the army to reach Mézières; so when he assumed command, the first thing he did was to order this movement. This order did not please General Lebrun, who felt that he was beginning to get the best of the situation; but he obeyed unhesitatingly and began retreating brigade by brigade."

Among the notes left by the Emperor is this one, which takes up the narrative at this point: "I could not understand what this movement of Ducrot meant, and I hastily sent off one of my staff, d'Hendecourt, to ask for an explanation, though my mind was fully made up not to interfere. I did not wish at such a crisis to quit the passive rôle which I had accepted. But this unfortunate officer never returned; he was carried off by a bomb. A change of command was to modify all these plans. Two days before, General de Wimpffen had arrived from Algeria and had taken over the command of Failly's corps. He knew nothing concerning the army, its situation, or the enemy's position. But this did not prevent him from drawing from his pocket a letter from the War Office putting him in command in case of any accident befalling Marshal MacMahon. General Ducrot, like a true soldier, immediately yielded but begged his successor not to countermand the retreat on Mézières 'which alone can save the army,' he said with much earnestness. In the meantime

the firing at La Moncelle, where I was standing, had become so hot that it was suggested that we withdraw a little behind a small wood which was not far off: But even there the shots were pretty thick, shells continually bursting as they struck the branches of the trees. Just then the Gose division came up and I descended with it from the heights into the Givonne valley, whence I rode up the Givonne hills, where I was joined by General de Wimpffen, to whom I repeated the good advice which General Ducrot had given him, drawing his attention to the mass of Prussian troops maneuvering in such a fashion as to eventually surround our troops. 'But the new chief,' as another officer said the next day, 'was filled with presumption and confidence as to the result of the fight.' It is quite true that, pointing to the swarming enemy, he said to me: 'I beg your Majesty not to be troubled at what you see; in two hours I shall have cast them all into the Meuse!' It was most unfortunate that in that hour of painful agony, when so much heroism was shown, the chief command changed three times within a few hours, which naturally gave rise to great lack of continuity in the direction of the maneuvers. I have always held the opinion expressed by the commission appointed to examine into the Sedan capitulation, viz., that General Ducrot's plan was the most rational one, for if it had failed—and it was, indeed, hedged round with difficulties—after a vigorous attempt had been made to open up the Mézières road, there was ground to hope that a portion of the army could have been saved through Belgian territory. And during all these changes in our tactics, the Prussian army calmly and relentlessly was

carrying out von Moltke's vast plan. Two corps crossed the Meuse at Donchery, and not meeting any French troops on the Mézières road, hastened towards Sedan to take part in the battle, so that before eleven o'clock, a powerful line, composed of 144 cannon, was established on the hills which flank the right bank of the Floing, and was beating back our posts on the heights on the opposite side of the valley. In vain General Douay tried to arrest this forward movement and threw his cavalry against the extreme right of the Prussian batteries. Colonel de Galliffet led the charge with the energy, the 'furia' for which he is famous. The brave men broke through the outposts and reached the supporting troops, but were unable to break the line which rained a shower of bullets into their ranks. An infantry attack against the village of Floing was rather successful. But this was nullified by the constantly increasing number of the German troops. It became plain that a vigorous offensive movement was about to begin against our front. In a word, little by little we were forced to abandon the ground we had won, and our soldiers returned to their former position on the heights. In this fearfully unequal struggle, we had henceforth nothing to do but to remain on the defensive and to prolong as best we could a hopeless resistance. But already desertion was setting in, the artillery was being dismounted and it became plainer and plainer that General Douay could not hold out much longer.

"In the direction of Bazeilles, the struggle had also changed its face, and when General Lebrun received from General de Wimpffen the order to retake the positions which General Ducrot had ordered

him to abandon, he found them occupied by the enemy who had seized Bazeilles and La Moncelle. Again we took the offensive, but there was no longer the same enthusiasm as in the morning, though we had been able to bring up some fresh troops. Nor was the firing we heard from the corps of Douay of a nature to encourage our poor men, who felt themselves attacked on both sides."

From General Pajol's papers, are taken the following details, which refer to this same moment of this fatal day: "Under a ceaseless rain of shells, the Emperor followed with a sad eye the vain efforts of the valiant army. Sometimes he suffered martyrdom but made no mention of his own pain. Later, speaking without bitterness, as he always did, he made these reflections: 'That was a cruel day for me. I had abdicated all authority and all military command, and I wandered over the battle field, where the destinies of the empire and the dynasty were being bandied, a powerless spectator. It was not difficult to see what would be the result of this supreme effort. If the struggle could be kept up for a while longer, the fatal catastrophe might be warded off for a time; but that was all, for what could be done, even by the bravest of the brave, against such a crushing number of men led with a preciseness of aim and unity of command that was totally lacking on our side?'

"Five Prussian corps covered the region. We had not 80,000 men to oppose to the German 200,000. The wounded, the fleeing, the overturned cannon, burning wagons,—all these things caught the eye of the Emperor, who was always more alive to what followed, than to what was actually going on in a

battle. His proverbial impassibility was giving place to a deep feeling of pity for the wounded. At Solferino and Magenta it was noticed that he, the conqueror, was profoundly moved by the painful sights he witnessed after the struggle. How then could he remain calm in the presence of such a struggle as this then in progress at Sedan? It was a terrible conflict, he said later, 'each stage of which was more fearful than its predecessor.' He thought of the now useless sacrifices, of the weeping mothers, of the anxiety of the government, of the sorrow of the Empress, whose courage, however, he knew to be equal to the occasion, of the effect that all this misery would have on his young son, who, though safe with trusty officers in Belgium, would be greatly moved by all that was happening, and of his own tottering throne. At a later period, the Emperor once spoke to me of this terrible moment in his troubled existence: 'I then saw that none would remember all my efforts to better the lot of the working classes and the poor; that all would forget the industrial and commercial prosperity during my reign, the new colonies added to the national domain, what was done for the arts and letters, in a word, what a grand place France occupied in the eyes of the whole world. All this and much else would be forgotten and only our faults and mistakes remembered!' These thoughts had a most depressing effect on the Emperor and finally got him into the mood where he wished to die on the battle field. But even this supreme relief was refused him. 'I had no luck that day,' he once remarked with a sad smile. At one moment, he got down from his horse and walked slowly along the line of gunners,

with one hand behind the hilt of his sword. Silent and impassible he moved over the battle field, as calmly as though he was crossing the grand drawing-room of the Tuileries in the presence of a throng of celebrities. He kept mounting the heights to the left of the Garenne wood and would have gone on still further if he had not been stopped by some infantry retreating towards the town. Shells were falling all about him. Two bombs struck the ground quite near him and his staff. The horses of General de Courson and Captain de Trécesson reared and fell, hurting their riders, while the Emperor was covered with fragments of earth and with smoke. 'Death passed very near me,' he said later, 'but I was reserved for still greater suffering.' "

This statement that the Emperor courted death at Sedan is no idle remark, but friend and foe alike agree on this point. My attention was once called to the statement of a German journal—the *Staatsanzeiger* of September 8, 1870—which said: "According to eye-witnesses at the battle of Sedan, the Emperor Napoleon exposed himself to such a degree that his wish to find death there was very evident." M. Jeannerod, the *Temps* correspondent, wrote to his journal at this same moment: "The Emperor wished to die." The fact is beyond question. But death passed him by as it did Ney on the plateau of Mont Saint Jean, when the bullets which he invited persisted in sparing him!

The Pajol notes continue: "Towards eleven o'clock, a thick cloud covered Bazeilles, and it was seen that the town was on fire. General Lebrun's troops were now forced to abandon their last posts and to withdraw to Balan and the adjacent hills.

When the break-up of our right wing was observed, a great shout went up from the German army and the enemy then began to climb up from the ravine, whereupon, our men, in spite of the general's earnest efforts commenced to flee towards Sedan. Turning to one of his aides-de-camp the Emperor said: 'There is but one bold move that can save the army. While the Prussians are for the most part on the right bank of the Meuse and threaten to turn us on the north, our troops should be brought back on to the left bank, cross the town and march on Donchery. This would throw the enemy's reserve into disorder and enable us to seize the batteries which are doing such terrible execution from the heights of Frémois.' It has been questioned whether such a plan could have been carried out in the last hours of the conflict. However this may be, it appears to have been the only one brought forward during the confusion of this fatal moment. After this remark, the Emperor fell again into his sad reverie and took the road which the retreating soldiers were rushing along. He was more deeply moved than ever by the state of discouragement which he perceived around him. At moments, he would stop and those with him felt that he hoped that one of the bullets which were so thickly flying about him might put a period to his misery. Several times his aides-de-camp were forced to forcibly hurry him away when the near approach of the enemy threatened to cause him to fall a prisoner in their hands. Then the imperial group would slowly withdraw towards the town, where they eventually arrived.

"The resistance at Givonne could last no longer. The Emperor saw this only too clearly. He then

thought of joining Douay to see what was possible in the direction of Mézières. But he soon found that it was impossible to reach the banks of the Floing, with his staff, owing to the crowded state of the roads. So he then decided to return to Sedan in order to confer with MacMahon concerning the final measures to be taken, and after that to leave the town by the Mézières gate. Some thirty thousand disbanded soldiers filled the streets, which were like a battle field, so thick and fast came the shots. At the moment when the Emperor was crossing the bridge over the Meuse which cuts the town in two, a shell burst in front of his horse. The violence of the explosion threw down the horse of the Prince of Moskowa, who was standing beside the Emperor, and caused him to roll under the animal. A thick cloud of dust enveloped his Majesty and the officers and soldiers rushed forward, fearing that he had been killed. But the smoke suddenly clearing, revealed the calm face of Napoleon III, without a muscle moved, and no sign of fear. A loud cheer greeted this striking example of coolness. A journalist friend wrote me the next day: 'When passing near our coffee-house, a shell burst but a few steps in front of his horse. But that strange mask gave no sign of emotion. Napoleon simply, with a wave of his hand, strove to check the cheers.' The Emperor rode to MacMahon's quarters."

Among the heroes of Sedan was the Marquis de Galliffet, whom the Emperor made a general in the midst of the confusion of the battle. His great charge is one of the most magnificent pages of French military history. His apparent shunning at a later date the men of the Empire and his

rather cool way of treating a system of government which had showered favors upon him caused General Galliffet to be judged rather severely, until recent years, as regards his conduct towards the Imperial dynasty. But since his occupancy of the War Office, just before and just after 1900, preceded several years before by his clever reorganization of our cavalry, which opportunity of distinguishing himself he owed by the way, to the friendship of Gambetta, this brilliant officer has been judged somewhat differently. It has been found that, beneath an affected appearance of indifference to persons and things, he really kept in memory his former benefactors. He visited the Empress in exile on several occasions and has not hesitated to speak and write in a more friendly tone. Nor was the Empress disinclined to indulgence concerning the former staff officer of the Emperor. Nor did he forget the sympathy which she expressed for him when he was so dangerously wounded during the Mexican expedition. The Emperor once said to one of his circle: "I feel grateful to General de Galliffet for his warm remembrance of us, for his visits to us in England, and for his noble and brave conduct at Sedan."

The Empress was always ready to explain away some of the subsequent acts of his political course. She was always on friendly terms with the Marquise de Galliffet, which may have been one of the reasons why there was a little coldness at times between the general and the sovereign; for, it will be remembered, that General Galliffet and his wife have been separated for many years. A note in the Pajol papers comes in well at this point. It runs as

follows: "Ambition and military fanaticism made Galliffet sometimes appear ungrateful to the Empire. The mistake which Galliffet made when thanks to his talents, his vigorous constitution and the patronage of Gambetta, he had become one of the unquestioned chiefs of the new French army, was to imagine that, if he turned his back entirely on all his past deeds and beliefs, these would be forgotten and forgiven. Others showed greater moral courage than he did and they were not made to suffer very much for the fidelity to the fallen régime. But he saw that some officers were handicapped thereby, and so did not hesitate to accept the accusation of forgetfulness. During the Commune, he showed himself a ruthless repressor, and called down upon his head the hatred of the revolutionary and advanced parties. So he perhaps thought it best later not to remind the new public that he was once a pet of the Emperor, and consequently did what he could to cause his Bonapartist connections to be forgotten. But he acted finally in a more honorable manner and the Empress was only too ready to overlook this momentary weakness."

Galliffet's heroic charge only delayed the moment when the French army was surrounded by the German army. Now the three angles of the battle field, that is, Illy, Floing and Bazeilles, were in the enemy's hands, and all our positions were threatened on the rear and on the flanks. Here and there, a few isolated struggles were kept up at several points, especially in the Garenne woods; but after three o'clock, the battle was lost beyond recovery. In the direction of Balan, however, there was some regularity in the fighting for there General de

Wimpffen had brought to bear all the available forces within reach. He wished to retake Bazeilles, and after a desperate struggle, really did succeed in getting possession of the village for a short time. But he was not well supported, the troops of Douay and Ducrot being occupied elsewhere, and already preparing to fall back on Sedan. General Lebrun was forced to follow suit, which he did slowly and in good order, and at six o'clock, he was the last to pass into Sedan, after having carried on a fight for thirteen hours.

"After talking the situation over with MacMahon," say unpublished notes of Generals Faverot de Kerbrech and Pajol, "the Emperor ordered his horse to be held in readiness, as he wished to return to the battle field and reach Douay's posts. But the succeeding acts of the tragedy were following one another with such rapidity that it was no longer possible, even for an Emperor to do what he wished. All the streets and roads leading out of Sedan were jammed full with horses, men, women and children fleeing before the fast-falling shells. Countless vehicles of all sorts blocked the ways. The Emperor stood waiting for a passage to be made for him. He was suffering terribly after those long hours passed in the saddle. His aides-de-camp knew what resolution was necessary to prevent himself from falling from his horse through sheer pain, and to this physical suffering was added an equally cruel moral suffering. Two years later, when Napoleon was being operated upon for the first time, the English surgeon, Sir Henry Thompson, exclaimed: 'The Emperor must have been a thousand times heroic to remain on horseback during the battle of

Sedan; the agony must have been constant. I have never known anything like it.' Yet at this moment he thought himself sufficiently strong to mount his horse once more, but while one of his aides went forward to reconnoiter, the Emperor worn out with fatigue, sank into a chair which had been brought into the court yard where the party was waiting. The noise and confusion without was evidently increasing, and the nature of the firing told that the close of the battle was rapidly approaching. The news from the front grew worse and worse. Shortly before three o'clock, Captain de Saint Haouen brought a letter from General de Wimpffen, asking the Emperor to place himself in the midst of his troops and try and break through the enemy's lines in the direction of Carignan. But his Majesty hesitated an instant. Though his private desire was to join the troops, he felt convinced that there was now little hope of getting through the circle so closely drawn around Sedan. He said to the officers around him: 'The first corps is dispersed, the seventh is crushed and I understand that there is no intention of a general movement of the army. All that is intended is to cut a passage, with the aid of the troops around Balan, through the German lines. I must say that I do not care to escape with my staff and the commander-in-chief, while the rest of the army is left in the lurch. So reply to General de Wimpffen that I decline to be a party to the sacrifice of the lives of several thousand men in order that I may escape.'

"This idea of breaking through investing lines was a favorite one in our side during this war, and, later General de Wimpffen took the Emperor to task

for having refused to try to get through to Carignan, as was proposed on this fatal afternoon. French public opinion was only too prone to blame the army and its chiefs for not adopting this system on several occasions during the war. Even after the capitulation of the army at Metz, faith in this system prevailed in many minds, and it did not get its death blow till the fall of Paris, when an army of some 300,000 men, protected by walls and forts, well provided with ammunition and food, yielded to an army of about the same strength, though more than one effort was made to break through the surrounding enemy. To try this at Sedan, at the moment when it was proposed by General de Wimpffen, was simply 'madness' as an officer on the spot well characterized it. At a later period, General de Wimpffen himself admitted the impossibility of carrying through what he had urged, for the soldiers themselves would not follow him. He has said of them: 'I had no unkind word for these men, whom I was urging to return to the front. They were indeed excusable, for they knew that we had twenty generals killed or wounded, some two thousand other officers and a round fifteen thousand privates in the same state. We had been fighting since four o'clock that morning, and we were 65,000 against 220,000 with artillery whose shots could not reach the enemy.'

"In the meanwhile, several generals declared that the flow of blood should be stopped and that an armistice should be asked for. When General Pellé came up, he said to the Emperor: 'I am only a soldier but I would save your Majesty. However, I fear that this is now impossible, for every attempt

to leave the town is sure to fail, in my opinion.' A council was held. The Emperor was surrounded by generals who had shown themselves more than heroic. General Ducrot was one of the first to speak. 'I should like to save your Majesty,' he said. 'But there is now no hope of saving the army, which is entirely surrounded and cannot escape. It is possible, however, when night comes on, to manage to get you and your officers and a small band of cavalry through the enemy's lines.' But in reply to this proposal, the Emperor for the second time refused to separate his own fate from that of the army. 'I desire to share the lot of the army,' he said, 'and I am absolutely opposed to any plan for effecting my escape which leaves the army behind.' All of the chiefs declared that it was out of the question to continue the fight any longer, that food and ammunition were both running short and that the army was practically crushed, disorganized and disheartened. The only thing to be done was to ask for a cessation of hostilities. The Emperor now felt more than ever that he should no longer allow blood to be shed uselessly.

"The question now was what would be the condition on which the King of Prussia would agree to an armistice? It is true that the army was at the mercy of the enemy. But Napoleon III believed in the generosity of princes, in that generosity which he had so often shown himself, notably after Solferino, where he treated the Emperor of Austria in a most chivalrous manner."

Speaking of this moment, the Emperor said to the Empress at a later date: "I could see no reason why Germany wished to prolong the war. I had ground to hope that she would not complicate the

situation by forcing France to accept humiliating terms, which would remain a cause of hatred between the two nations long after the final peace was signed. In a manifesto which the Crown Prince of Prussia published at the moment when he took command of his troops, he said that Germany had taken up arms not against France but against me. So I naturally concluded that if I handed my person over to the King, this would put an end to the conflict and a speedy and satisfactory peace could be brought about. I found later, however, that this manifesto was an empty word, whose aim was to sow the seeds of discord among Frenchmen and to bring about a fresh trial of the famous system of 'war through internal revolutions.' To disorganize France after having beaten her on the battle field and to hand her over a prey to demagogues and revolutionists, that was the object which Bismarck had in mind. He knew that hereditary monarchy was no longer revered in France, and what was the safeguard of another nation did not at all count in France, where the prestige of the Bonapartes was the only thing that could restrain the demagogy. The dynasty was suddenly destroyed and Prussia could not resist the temptation to take an immediate advantage of the disaster. However, a few months later, owing to the obstinate resistance of France, Bismarck wished for a moment to treat with you or with me, frightened by the progress of demagogism and the instability of the Government of National Defence. But at this moment at Sedan, victory was sure, and it was not the Empire but France which Bismarck was fighting against. 'The aggressive

temper of France,' he said, 'troubles the peace of Europe.' ''

''About four o'clock,'' the notes continue, ''the King of Prussia ordered all the available artillery to gather on the left bank of the Meuse and to commence a bombardment of Sedan. This started up fires in all directions. Houses were falling in and the panic-stricken inhabitants were fleeing and shrieking through the streets. Some of the regiments showed signs of mutiny and the officers were insulted by their men. The generals were openly accused of incapacity and treason was hinted at. The municipal council sought out the Emperor and beseeched him to put a stop to the firing and save the defenseless inhabitants from the horrors of the bombardment and the town from total destruction. It was necessary to come to some decision in the midst of 'hell let loose over Sedan' as one of the officers well expressed the situation at that moment. All of the generals present were of the same mind. 'But where is General de Wimpffen?' every one asked, for he alone, as commander-in-chief was authorized to ask for an armistice. General Lebrun, who had been sent to find him, returned without him. At this moment, the Emperor alone had a soul above personal considerations. As the commander-in-chief was not there and no other general dared to assume the responsibility, if thousands of lives were to be saved, he must sacrifice himself. He had had nothing to do with the fatal plan which had thrown the army into this yawning pit of Sedan, nothing to do with the decisions which had brought about the catastrophe, and yet it devolved upon him to settle the humiliating business of the armistice

and capitulation. The Emperor acted quickly. With admirable grandeur of soul, in order to save his soldiers, he re-assumed the reins of authority and signed the painful act rendered necessary by the faults of others. He gave up his own personal liberty for the sake of that army, which, later, so heartlessly turned against him and dragged him through the mud of insult and ingratitude. Forthwith, the Emperor wrote his celebrated missive: 'Monsieur, my brother: Having been unable to die in the midst of my troops, I have nothing left but to hand my sword to your Majesty.'

"At the very moment when the Emperor was finishing this note, Colonel von Bronsart arrived from German headquarters asking for the surrender of the French army and the town. In the meantime, the white flag was hoisted every where, though firing still continued in many parts of the wide battle field. In fact, it was past seven before hostilities ceased every where. The struggle had lasted nearly fifteen hours!"

Among my papers is this note, but I am not certain from whom it emanated: "While the Emperor and his generals were engaged in bringing about an armistice, nothing was seen of General de Wimpffen. After the fruitless effort made at Balan, he retired from the field of battle about five o'clock. When he reached Sedan, one thought seemed to be uppermost in his mind, viz., to throw the responsibility of the disaster, which he had done so much to bring about, on the generals who had vied with him in devotion and in courage and on the Emperor who had had the generosity to sacrifice himself in his stead. It is true that MacMahon's plan was vague

and undecided; but that of General de Wimpffen cannot be said to have been very clear or determined. The fact is that he had no well-thought out plan in his head when he insisted on having the command handed over to him. The official inquiry into the Sedan capitulation concluded that 'when General de Wimpffen expressed the hope, that, after throwing the Bavarians into the Meuse, he would be able to drive back the right wing of the German army or open a way to Carignan and Montmédy, he was entertaining a plan that was not sufficiently plausible or justified under the circumstances to free him from a very large portion of the responsibility for the disastrous events which led to the capitulation.' General de Wimpffen had claimed the chief command when the battle was not entirely lost and he was anxious to shirk all responsibility when there remained nothing further to do but to accomplish the painful act of capitulation. Arrived at Sedan, he did not go immediately to confer with the Emperor, but sent him his resignation. But the Emperor refused to receive it, saying: 'General you are not at liberty to resign when the army may yet be saved by an honorable capitulation.' Here was a general who eagerly seized the reins of authority at nine in the morning, when, if the command had been left in General Ducrot's hands the result might have been very different, and who, when all was lost, wished to throw on to other shoulders all the responsibilties of the situation which he had himself created. Some strange thoughts must have run through his head during that fatal day, when more than one strong brain seems to have been weakened. I have seen a letter of his which contains these odd

words: 'I might have hidden myself and thus been saved. Some of the good people of Sedan urged me to do so.' He appears to have quite forgotten that he owed something to an army which had lost 17,000 men in carrying out his orders."

A memorandum in the handwriting of Napoleon III reads as follows: "After some reflection, General de Wimpffen concluded to come to my quarters. It was then half past eight in the evening. He suddenly came into the room where I was seated with the other generals. No one cast any blame on him. But he, however, immediately addressed me a speech which, while it exculpated himself, threw the blame for the disaster on his lieutenants. 'Sire,' began this unfortunate speech, 'if I lost the battle, if I am beaten, it is because my orders were not executed, it is because your generals refused to obey me.' This ill-timed accusation led to a very violent scene. General Ducrot, with poorly-suppressed indignation, exclaimed: 'To whom do you refer? Are you speaking to me? Alas! your orders were only too well executed! Had you not countermanded my orders to retreat, in spite of my urgent opposition, we would now be safe and sound at Mézières, or, at any rate, beyond the reach of the enemy'. General Ducrot only spoke the truth, at least as regards the stopping of the retreat. The discussion now grew warmer and warmer, until it reached such a boiling point that I felt called upon to check it. After having somewhat calmed down the two officers, I requested to be left alone with General de Wimpffen, when I gave him his instructions and the papers drawn up which conferred on the negotiators full powers. This done, the commander-in-chief left

Sedan with Generals Castlenau and Faure to meet the German plenipotentiaries. They were somewhat late in reaching the village of Donchery, where General von Moltke was awaiting them. He announced Germany's conditions with a cold arrogance, I was told, which seemed to indicate that no modifications would be made in them,—the French army was to become prisoner of war, with all its arms and baggage, and, though the officers were to be prisoners of war like their men, they were to be allowed to keep their swords. It was hard to argue matters with over two hundred thousand conquerors who possessed some eight hundred cannon, when your own force was made up of almost disbanded troops, surrounded on all sides and half famished. Nevertheless, General de Wimpffen did his best under the circumstances. He appealed to the spirit of military comradeship and dwelt on his own position at the head of an army whose defeat was a foregone conclusion, forced to end a brilliant career with a lamentable surrender. 'I beg you, general,' he said, he told me afterwards, 'that this hard trial for me be made as easy as possible by offering us the best possible conditions of peace. I would ask that we be allowed to leave the town with arms and baggage, provided we promise not to serve again during the present war.' Unfortunately, General de Wimpffen's fame was not so great as to touch deep enough the German commander. Marshal MacMahon's name would have carried more weight with von Moltke, who listened courteously, but made no reply. Thereupon, de Wimpffen changed his tone and said rather stoutly, so he told me: 'If you cannot grant me

better conditions, I cannot accept those you offer. I will immediately appeal to the army, urge the troops to defend their honor, and we will try to make a sortie or defend Sedan to the bitter end.' The German commander coldly replied, briefly describing the respective condition of the two armies and showing that the French army could not possibly resist any longer. General de Wimpffen then took up the political aspect of the situation, and said: 'Germany should desire a worthy peace. The French nation is particularly chivalrous and would feel very grateful for any generous consideration that might be shown her. Such an act would diminish the feeling of humility and render more certain a long and worthy peace. But if, on the contrary, you insist on forcing on us hard conditions, you will excite anger and hatred in the heart of all our citizens and soldiers. Our national pride will be deeply wounded, for the country is one with the army and will share with it the same feelings. You will thus awaken every bad instinct now dulled by the softening influence of civilization, and will run the risk of laying the foundation for an unending strife between France and Prussia.' Thereupon, Bismarck spoke up, and these are his words reported to me by General de Wimpffen: 'General, though your argument appears serious at first glance, it is really beside the mark, for national gratitude is but a myth, but a myth,' he said, repeating these last words twice. 'It is possible to meet with gratitude from a sovereign, sometimes even from a ruling family; and it occasionally happens that you may implicitly rely on such gratitude. But you must never count on a nation's gratitude. Were the

French like other peoples; if they had firmly established institutions, such as ours; if they honored and respected their institutions; if their sovereigns followed one another regularly on the throne,—if all these things were so, why then we might have faith in the gratitude of the Emperor and his son, and estimate its worth. But during the last eighty years governments in France have been so unstable and so numerous; they have changed so rapidly, so curiously and so contrary to all expectation, that one can rely on nothing in your country. Consequently, it would be madness, it would be building on sand, for any government to base any hopes on the friendship of a French sovereign.'

"These words meant that Prussia was disposed to treat on an equitable basis with me, but, fearing a revolution, she was determined to demand guarantees which would not be affected by any unexpected future events. If it had been possible to ally in Bismarck's mind this fear of some sort of a revolution at Paris, Prussian exactions would have been notably decreased. What was needed on that occasion was a man of tact, eloquence and persuasive powers, who would have made Bismarck see that it was Europe which overturned the Empire in 1814 and in 1815, while it was France which raised it up again. Such an envoy would have reminded Bismarck of the plebiscitum which had so recently recorded the nation's will, and might have convinced him that the army would back me and the Prince Imperial in a joint effort to reëstablish a firm government in France. But unfortunately de Wimpffen was not equal to the occasion; he did not seize his opportunities, he did not promise that no outbreak

should be permitted in Paris, he did not declare that the army was faithful, and he did not show the slightest sign of protest against the suggestion of the overthrowing of the existing government. In a word, de Wimpffen's presentation of the situation, present and future, was far from encouraging, and tended to increase Bismarck's belief that the revolutionary movement had already begun to deeply affect the minds of Frenchmen. Why, even de Wimpffen seemed wavering! So the idea of securing material security of some kind before coming to terms took a still stronger hold on the Prussian diplomat. 'If I do not feel that I can rely on the gratitude of an ephemeral government,' the general still further reports Bismarck as saying, 'how much less reliance can be placed on a nation which has always been hostile to Germany. Why, do you not know that France has declared war on Germany thirty times? She has not forgotten Sadowa, and she will never forgive Sedan.' Then, with the greatest audacity and untruthfulness, he continued: 'France has not changed in her old wish to attack us. She desired the present war. Napoleon III provoked us to a conflict, his object being to strengthen his family interests at the expense of the popular mania for glory. I am aware that the sensible and healthy portion of the population did not desire this conflict, though it was only too ready to accept it, war once declared. I know, too, that it was not the army which was the most hostile to us. The part of the nation which clamored for war was the part that makes and unmakes governments. It was the mob and the journalists,' and General de Wimpffen told me that the Count laid especial stress

on this last word. 'Those are the people we wish to punish and for that purpose we must go to Paris.' Then, taking up another topic, he continued: 'Perhaps one of those governments which respects nothing and which makes the laws that pleases it, may be set up in Paris; and it may not recognize the capitulation which you are about to sign for the army. It might even force the officers to break their parole; for it is probable that the country will try and defend itself at any cost.'

"General de Wimpffen was naturally much offended by the violent language of Bismarck, and seeing that no concessions could be obtained, he exclaimed decidedly: 'I cannot sign such a capitulation, and we shall begin the battle again.' At these words, the conference was on the point of breaking up, when General Castelnau took up the conversation, saying: 'I wish to remind you that the Emperor has just sent his sword to the King and given himself up as prisoner; and he has done this in the hope of saving the army from too severe terms of surrender. His Majesty, in a word, has sacrificed himself for the sake of his soldiers. It would seem, therefore, that the King should take this fact into consideration in fixing the terms of this surrender.' Had these remarks been addressed to the King of Prussia himself, they might perhaps have had some effect; for the victorious sovereign would unquestionably have been touched by this appeal to the chivalrous side of his character. But the words fell on the ears of two men of iron, who were successfully carrying out a long-premeditated plan and who were quite devoid of sentimentality of any sort. They had but one object in view, viz., the securing of what

was best for the military and political interests of Germany.

"Bismarck further said: 'What is the sword that the Emperor has surrendered? Is it the sword of France or is it simply his own sword? If it were that of France, our conditions could be modified and your mission would be of a more weighty character.' This rough remark again showed that Bismarck desired peace and was ready to make concessions to obtain it. As he feared the possible setting up at Paris of a revolutionary government, which really happened not many hours later, he clearly saw that it was to the interests of Germany to treat now that he had a regular government to deal with, and that if this course were pursued, it would be necessary to let me have at my disposition an armed force with which to cope with the threatening insurrection at the capital. So, in order to obtain favorable conditions, it would have been necessary to negotiate, along with the capitulation of the army of Sedan, the preliminaries of peace, as was done later at the capitulation of Paris. But the generals had received no instructions on this head and did not dare to enter upon political subjects, though here was really the rub; so they honestly answered the question of Bismarck with these words: 'The sword to which you refer is the Emperor's.' General de Wimpffen informed me that he could see that this response particularly pleased von Moltke, who immediately said: 'Such being the case, the Emperor's act can in no way modify the conditions of the surrender.' 'Then,' answered de Wimpffen, 'we will recommence the battle.' Von Moltke replied coldly: 'The truce expires at four o'clock in the

morning and that hour the firing will recommence.' Thereupon, all the negotiators rose to their feet, and the French generals called for their horses.

"Though von Moltke evidently did not shrink from the barbarous thought of turning Sedan into a pile of ashes and corpses, von Bismarck, less affected by the glamor of victory, saw in the breaking off of the negotiations an indefinite adjournment of a pacific solution of the problem. So he quietly proposed that all sit down again, which was done, when von Moltke once more laid before them the condition of the two opposing armies. 'We are superior in numbers and the carrying power of our artillery,' he said, and said only too truly. 'Furthermore, we occupy positions from which it will be impossible for you to dislodge us, and in a few hours we could totally destroy Sedan.' 'I made no answer,' de Wimpffen said to me, 'for I knew he was telling the truth. But I made one request, to the effect that the truce be prolonged until nine o'clock in order to call the generals together for a council of war. 'I am ready to grant that,' replied von Moltke coldly. It was the only concession that he made. At one o'clock in the morning, the French officers were back again in Sedan, and de Wimpffen came straight to me to make his report, saying: 'Sire, we are given only the hardest of terms; but I tried in vain to secure better ones. We can count now only on your Majesty's efforts to extricate us as honorably as possible from our unfortunate position.' "

The government of September 4th, published in the *Journal Officiel* a most slanderous and untrue report of this interview of the generals with the

German envoys. We there read: "The interview opened with a discussion concerning the conditions of the surrender, during which Napoleon III walked to and fro in the room, smoking cigarettes and showing himself strangely callous to the situation, leaving matters entirely to the generals and the Prussians." Of course this is absolutely false, for in the first place, the Emperor was not present at the conference, and if he had been, those who knew his character, need not be told that at such a moment, the Emperor at the council-board, his voice would have been heard at every point in the debate. He said more than once to the Empress in later years: "I only wish I had been there!" Another idle and cruel tale which I have always refuted was that representing the Emperor driving over the battle field of Sedan in a landau, smoking cigarettes, as the wheels passed over the bodies of the wounded! How little they knew him, is the only necessary comment on this abominable invention.

The Emperor gives this unpublished account of his part in the negotiations: "On September 2nd, at break of day, I left Sedan with the Prince of Moskowa in an open carriage drawn by two horses. I mention the number of horses, because a chronicler had stated that the number was four, and I am told that a still more imaginative person even attached six steeds to our poor vehicle! I had decided to make this effort in order to try and get better terms for the soldiers. How could you so humiliate yourself? somebody has asked. But I did not see then and I cannot see now anything humiliating in this effort of mine to soften the fate of the gallant army which had just suffered so severely. Between Sedan

and Donchery, we met Bismarck who was on horseback. On catching sight of us, he dismounted and saluted me militarily. We then entered a little empty house by the roadside, and in a room containing I remember, but two chairs and a table, our interview took place. I immediately brought forward the question that was uppermost in my mind, that of getting fair conditions of surrender for the army. But I soon perceived that the Count wished to use the state of the army to induce me to take up questions of a political nature. 'Von Moltke alone is competent to consider these army matters,' he said; 'but might we not take up the political situation?' Of course there are not lacking in the past examples of monarchs who, by making territorial sacrifices have got themselves out of present difficulties and set themselves firmly on their throne again. Bismarck evidently thought that some such example as this might serve him at this juncture. But he should have known as I did that France is not a monarchial country of that sort, not like Austria, where each time that a disaster has befallen Francis Joseph, his subjects have gathered more closely around him. I had not forgotten how King Louis of Holland renounced his sceptre the day his people's interests differed from those of his own country, nor how my great uncle twice left the throne, preferring exile and captivity rather than being an obstacle to the establishment of peace. I soon let Bismarck see that my mind was fixed on this point,—I would not owe my liberty to the slightest sacrifice on the part of the French people. I longed for peace, considered it necessary, and even advised the Regent to bring it about if possible, but

I meant to leave the French nation free to decide that great question for herself through her properly authorized representatives. I consequently replied to the Count that 'being, at present, a prisoner of war, I am not in a position to treat about peace, but that the Regent, surrounded by her ministers and the chambers was alone in a condition to open negotiations of this nature.' At this moment, von Moltke came up and I immediately asked him to permit the army to withdraw to Belgian territory, there to remain to the end of the war; or at least to delay the final arrangements concerning the capitulations until after my interview with the King of Prussia which was soon to take place. Von Moltke replied that he could not assume such a responsibility but would lay the matter before his sovereign. He thereupon left my presence in order to see the king before my arrival. I then continued my route to the castle of Bellevue where I was to meet the king.

"In the meanwhile, General de Wimpffen at Sedan had called together the generals for a council of war. There assembled not less than thirty-eight generals, the commanders of corps, divisions, and the artillery and engineering branches of the service. General de Wimpffen then explained the situation to them; told them what were the conditions of capitulation imposed by the Prussians; stated how he and his colleagues had declined to accept such conditions, and then asked if, in their opinion, it were possible for the army to renew the fight. General de Wimpffen informed me soon afterwards that a large majority of those present immediately answered the question in the negative. Two generals

alone expressed the opinion that the contest should be continued, either by the defense of Sedan or by a vigorous sortie. But finally these two officers, after looking into the situation more closely concluded that they were wrong and went over to the majority, whereupon it was unanimously agreed to capitulate."

One of these generals wrote to the Empress a few hours later a curious letter which may serve as the conclusion to this portion of this tragedy of Sedan. He said: "After the council of war, de Wimpffen called for his horse and, as directed by the council, hurried off to the castle of Bellevue, where he found our poor Emperor who had not yet seen the King of Prussia. I learned that the latter feared that the Emperor might weaken his decision, or, which is more probable, did not wish to perform the disagreeable act of refusing his demand, and so had delayed meeting him till the capitulation was signed. The document had been drawn up by the Prussian staff officers, and it was an exact copy of the proposals made the day before. General de Wimpffen then signed it. A few minutes later, the King came in surrounded by princes and many officers. Of course it was a sad moment for us, and especially for our good emperor who, your Majesty will remember, had not seen the King since the exhibition of 1867, when the Emperor was at the zenith of human prosperity and surrounded by all the marvels of beautiful Paris. How well I recall those brilliant days and how it must have all flashed back on the mind of his Majesty. I thought I could read all this in his sad eyes. I saw again that never-to-be-forgotten review at Longchamp which has been

baptized, your Majesty will recollect, the Review of the Three Emperors, where by the Emperor Napoleon's side rode this King of Prussia and the Czar Alexander. Well, the King was very courteous and appeared much moved. The two sovereigns remained alone for a few minutes, and I understand, our Emperor begged the King to do all he could for the army, and the latter made some sort of a vague promise, I believe. But what could he do, even if he wished to, now that the capitulation had been signed? The whole matter was settled."

There has been considerable discussion in the past years as to whether Sedan should have fallen as it did and when it did. At first, all of the critics did not agree on this point. But to-day, there can be no two opinions among students of the question and impartial minds. For a long time however, the public mind was poisoned by false stories concerning the part played by the Emperor,—stories circulated at the moment when home politics was very bitter in France and when it was hoped that these stories would destroy the rising prospects of Bonapartism. Zola in the "Débacle" gives a fairly exact relation of the events. The famous novelist once said to a close friend of the Empress, who reported the conversation to her: "Before I began to write anything, I spoke with many persons who had witnessed the events I wished to describe and I made many notes of what they said. I may add that I am not a Bonapartist, nor were several of those whom I consulted. So I think I am able to give a truthful account. I consider it historically true to present 'the Emperor advancing alone, in the midst of bullets and shells, advancing to meet his

fate, without exhibiting any haste, retaining his customary and indifferent attitude.' It is also my opinion as further expressed in my book, that if the firing had not been stopped 'Sedan would have been lighted up like a torch,' and that 'the imperious necessity of the capitulation is evident even to the most foolhardy of officers.' I see no objection to the Empress being told these facts, if you think them of any value.''

General Pajol, the Emperor's tireless aide-de-camp, who never left him during that terrible day, once said to the Empress: ''On the morrow of those sad events, I prepared a short statement which gave the exact truth concerning the Emperor's part in this Sedan Tragedy. But the government of M. Thiers fearing the effect this narration might have on public opinion at that moment, refused to let me publish it. The minister of the interior of that day went so far as to issue a circular letter to his subordinates threatening to prosecute anybody who should aid or abet the distribution of my document! It quite upset that groundless charge that the Emperor was carelessly smoking at the most cruel moment of the final day, whereas the truth is that the Emperor neither thought of eating or smoking all the time I was with him. At half past eleven on September 2nd, the Emperor had taken no food whatever, notwithstanding the terrible fatigue and emotion of the previous day and night. Perceiving that he was quite exhausted, one of us urged him to eat something; but he replied that as the King of Prussia might arrive at any moment, he did not wish to be found at table 'like any ordinary mortal on any ordinary day.' I then went out and got

him a piece of bread and a flask of wine and almost forced the Emperor to eat and drink."

Two letters written to the Empress at this moment throw a flood of light on what were the Emperor's real feelings during these terrible hours. These letters have never been given before just as they were written and are copied here from the originals. The first letter is written the day of the surrender and is dated from the headquarters of the Emperor. It runs as follows:—

"My dear Eugénie: It is impossible to tell you what I have suffered and am still suffering. This march of the army was contrary to all military principles and was sure to end in disaster. Indeed the catastrophe is complete. I would have preferred death to such a disastrous capitulation and yet, under the circumstances, it is the only way of avoiding the butchery of 60,000 persons. All this might be endurable to me if all my tortures were centered here. But I am constantly thinking of you, of our son and of the unfortunate country. May God protect it! What will happen in Paris? I have just seen the king. He had tears in his eyes when speaking of the sorrow I must endure. He offers me one of his castles, near Hesse Cassel. But what care I for the spot where I shall have to live? I am in despair. Good-by. I kiss you tenderly."

Here is the second letter:

"My dear Eugénie: After the terrible misfortune to which I have been a witness, I am continually thinking of the dangers you are threatened with and I am very anxious about the news I shall receive

from France. The catastrophe was inevitable. Our march was most imprudent and it was, furthermore, badly conducted. But I never dreamed that the catastrophe would be so terrible. Just imagine an army surrounding a strong town and itself being surrounded by far superior forces. After the fight of a few hours, our troops tried to get into the town again, when it was found full to overcrowding. Down on this mass of unprotected heads, the shells came falling on all sides, killing persons in the streets, breaking in the roofs of houses and burning them to the ground. In the midst of all this destruction, the generals came to tell me that all resistance was impossible saying the troops were disorganized, ammunition given out and food short. We then tried a sortie, which was unsuccessful. I was four hours on the battle field. This march in the midst of the Prussian troops has been a real torture to me. Good-by and tender kisses.

"NAPOLEON."

This last letter was written from Bouillon, just across the Belgian frontier, and the facts for the following account of the Emperor's unhappy journey are based on notes furnished me by one of the subordinate officers who accompanied him. The imperial party was surrounded by German soldiers up to the Belgian line, where their place was taken by Belgian soldiers. "I noticed," writes this officer, "that the Emperor's room at the Bouillon Hotel was decorated with three lithographs representing Mars cursing Fate, Apollo playing on the harp and Vulcan cast out of heaven. What reminders of our misfortunes! His Majesty, on entering the room, fell

into an armchair and remained silent for a long time. Here it was that he heard of the death of General Margueritte, whom he had seen in a dying condition the day before, and the sad news deeply affected him. I saw tears in his eyes. From Bouillon we drove to Libramont, whence the journey was continued by train. The first stop was at Recogne, where the Belgian troops presented arms and were reviewed by the Emperor. After a meal, his Majesty went up to the battery of artillery, which was stationed on the square, and spoke with the officer in command. He examined the guns, which were similar to the Prussian cannon, and talked with his staff about them. A painful scene occurred at the Libramont station which was greatly crowded with prisoners and wounded. A madman rushed forward and insisted on speaking with the Emperor, shouting at the top of his voice that the French were victorious and the Prince Imperial on the throne. But he was finally led away, and our train soon got under way. At Jemelle, Prince Pierre Bonaparte joined us and was affectionately greeted by the Emperor. Marloie and Liège were passed through without anything of importance happening, and we arrived at Verviers, where it was decided that the Emperor should take some rest. There was almost a riot in the street, the partisans of France and of Germany coming to blows; but the Emperor paid little attention to this. It was only too evident that his thoughts were elsewhere. Here we learned that the Empress had arrived safely in England and that the Prince Imperial had been offered a safe shelter by Comte de Baillet, Governor of Namur. The Emperor worked far into the night.

The departure for Cassel was fixed for midday the next morning, and to prevent the trouble of the day before, troops were sprinkled along the street all the way from the hotel to the station. Just before we started, General Chazal, the commander of the Belgian troops, addressed the crowds of people in front of the hotel in these words, which I noted while he was speaking: 'The Emperor of the French will appear in a moment. He is going to Germany as a prisoner of war. For the present, he is Belgium's guest. In the name of Belgian hospitality and in the name of the city of Verviers, I beg you to treat him with respect due to his great misfortunes. I do not doubt for a moment that you will do otherwise. I know your kind hearts and good feelings, and I am sure you will do the right thing on this occasion and under these painful circumstances.' As our poor Emperor came down the steps of the hotel, leaning on the arm of the aged general, all hats were removed and the vast crowd showed him every respect. He got quietly in the carriage which carried him to the station, and when the train moved off and he appeared at the window of his car, a long shout of 'Hurrah for the Emperor!' broke forth from every throat. It was a moving sight which I shall not soon forget.''

It has been noticed in the two letters given above that the Emperor criticized the march from Chalons to Sedan. This act is far more open to blame than the final surrender, and calls for further consideration before quitting this painful subject of the Sedan Tragedy.

In 1871, M. Granier de Cassagnac sent the Emperor the manuscript of a book which he meant to

publish concerning the fall of the Empire, asking that he be kind enough to examine it and modify it as he deemed necessary in the interest of the truth. This the Emperor did, returning the manuscript with this note, in his own hand, attached thereto: "Discipline is as necessary in a political party as in an army, and it is essential, therefore, that you defer to what I consider useful, as it is on behalf of the cause which I represent, and not publish this manuscript yet." But some of the notes made for this book were never sent; at least so I have always supposed; and a few notes are given here, taken from the original dictated copy, which is not in the chirography of the Emperor himself, but in that of a confidential secretary who worked under his Majesty's orders during several months in the winter of 1871-2. One of these notes runs as follows:

"The Emperor, who has been loaded with all the responsibility of the unlucky march on Sedan, should rightfully assume none. At this moment, he directed neither the army nor the government, and the advice which he gave Marshal de MacMahon and General de Palikao was not followed. It should be said in extenuation of the mistake made that Marshal Bazaine did not furnish the authorities at Chalons an exact statement of his movements. It was supposed there, which was not the case, however, that Bazaine had left Metz; so the move from Chalons was undertaken in the expectation of meeting the other army. As is well known, the Emperor favored an immediate return to Paris, and M. Rouher, who came down to Chalons, was of the opinion that this move was far less dangerous than an eastward march, especially as there was not perfect

unity of mind in the army at this moment. The Emperor strongly condemned, as he said at the time, 'a hesitating march eastward, when it was pretty sure there is not time enough to join Bazaine before the meeting of the armies of the Prince Royal of Prussia and of the Prince Royal of Saxony.'

"The Government of September 4th, which rose from the prostrate body of the Empire, strengthened its position chiefly by deceiving the French public as to the general causes which had brought about the war and the special reasons which led our second army to make that fatal capitulation. When the result of the bloody and glorious battles fought around Metz revealed the impossibility of protecting Paris by withdrawing the Rhine army along the Argonne, it then became necessary to immediately form a second army beneath walls of the capital. The Emperor and MacMahon thought that the army then stationed at Chalons should fill that mission. It consisted at this moment of some hundred thousand men, divided into four corps. The first corps, by far the best,—was made up chiefly of the heroic regiments whom only superior numbers were able to crush at Froschwiller. Tired out by forced marches, upset morally by an unexpected defeat, weakened by physical and mental suffering, these men the Emperor and Marshal thought, needed rest and time in order to become once more strong and enthusiastic. The Emperor had also found that the fifth corps, disorganized by a weary retreat from Bitche to the Chalons camp, through Neufchateau, had lost, though not through fighting, its baggage and ammunition. The troops were much depressed and demoralized, and evidently not in a state to under-

take such a campaign as that of Sedan proved to be. The seventh corps, which had been formed at Belfort, whence it had just been brought back, passing by way of Paris, had not undergone the hardships or the defeats of the two other corps. But its organization was barely completed and the soldiers were not thoroughly united and lacked confidence. There was, lastly, the twelfth corps, which had been only just formed. Its officers could really rely on but four new regiments and four regiments of marines, forming the first and third divisions of the corps. The second division consisted of four regiments of marines, forming the first and third whose men had never fired a shot in their life. Such was the army then gathered together at Chalons.

"There were two different proposals for the utilizing of this army. One suggested the immediate marching to the aid of Bazaine. But this plan was fraught with danger, for, if the Chalons army were divided, and a part of it took the road to Verdun, the route to Paris would be open to the Crown Prince of Prussia, who was advancing by forced marches. It became necessary, therefore, to choose between two equally painful alternatives,—either to abandon Marshal Bazaine or to abandon Paris. The safer plan was certainly to take the army back to the neighborhood of Paris and there to offer battle to the Crown Prince in a favorable position. Even if defeat should ensue, I felt then and I still feel that an army of a hundred thousand men would have sufficed to prevent the enemy from entering the capital, especially as at that moment, as is now known, the Germans never imagined that they could take Paris. Again, the return of the army to Paris

would restore to the government its former strength and courage, both of which had been impaired by the attacks of the opposition. The situation would be saved and the Emperor would once more hold the reins of power. General Trochu's position would then have become secondary and the republican agitators would have been checked at the very start. Even admitting that the recent ill-success at the front had detracted from my prestige, it cannot for one instant be imagined that an army such as the French army still was at that moment would have easily been got to side with a revolutionary party in the very face of the enemy. If the attempt were made to assist Bazaine, the army was of course exposed to the uncertain fate of battle. If success were to crown the effort, it would be necessary to beat the 70,000 men of the Prince of Saxony before they could be joined by the forces of the Prince of Prussia. In case we were victorious, we would then have an army of some 300,000 men on the enemy's flank, and the general struggle could have then been continued under fairly equal numerical conditions. Our troops would have gained confidence, as they always do better when on the offensive, and the position of the German troops, now well advanced into French territory, would have been seriously compromised. Under these circumstances, a victory might have entirely altered the course of events and the campaign might have ended in favor of France.

"The return to Paris, however, was tempting. Marshal MacMahon was to lead back the army to the walls of the capital, where it was to be put in perfect condition, well drilled, thoroughly revictualed and its morale restored, and where it was to calmly

await the on-coming of the enemy, much of whose force would be weakened, it was confidently expected, by the army on the Rhine. In the meanwhile, the Emperor who had at that moment abdicated all military direction, would re-assume his powers and the government would be once again concentrated at Paris. The Legislative Body, which had become turbulent, would be dissolved, the noisy political clubs would be closed, dangerous individuals would be suppresed, the city would be properly fortified with regulars and thus be preserved from the dangers of a so-called 'citizen soldiery.' For a moment, it looked as though this plan of returning to Paris would be adopted. In fact, the Marshal actually set off in that direction, and got as far as Reims, where the army camped on August 21st, on the banks of the Marne and Aisne canal. But we stopped the onward march there, for it began to look as though Bazaine might call upon us to come to his aid. MacMahon said to the Emperor: 'I think it wiser to continue towards Paris, notwithstanding Bazaine, for the experience at Reichshoffen has taught me prudence and I do not at all like the idea of advancing alone among these German forces.' The Emperor shared these views of his marshal and replied to him in these words: 'I have but a limited faith in the Chalons army's being able to succeed in an undertaking which depends on precision in movements. Nor can I forget the great influence exerted by Paris over the rest of France and I fully realize the fact that if the capital once gets into the hands of either the Germans or the republicans, the cause of the Second Empire is lost. But if on the contrary, we put up a good fight under the walls of

Paris, the whole situation would be changed, both as regards our foreign and our home enemies. We would thus gain time, would secure internal order, and the reins of power having again been seized by authorized hands, a speedy and honorable peace must soon follow. So in my eyes, as in yours, Marshal, the matter of prime importance at this moment is that Paris be defended and saved.' Though the Emperor spoke in these words to Marshal MacMahon, he did not feel himself in a position to give orders in this sense. Military command had been vested in the marshals and civil government had been placed in the hands of the regent and her ministers; nor was it the wish or the intention of the Emperor to change this system in the midst of such a crisis as that through which the country was then passing.

"The Empress wrote to the Emperor at this very moment: 'It is easy for you to realize what are my hesitations in the face of such painful delays and differences of opinion. But I have left the decision entirely to the ministers and I venture to suggest that you do the same. The War Minister had been informed by your aide-de-camp, General de Béville, of the view which you take of the situation at Chalons; but the minister does not share your way of looking at the matter and his opinion is approved by the council. In a word, General de Palikao considers Paris perfectly safe and does not think the time has yet come to abandon the struggle in the Vosges or to make concentrated efforts for the protection of the capital. He thinks MacMahon's army might reach Verdun by the 25th, and attack the Saxon Prince's forces under very favor-

able conditions; he might even force him to fall back and thus open up the Metz road. According to the War Minister, there is nothing to fear from the King of Prussia, who is too far away to interfere with our movement. This strikes me as exact, for I have learned from my own sources of information that the King was only at Vitry on the 25th, more than sixty miles from the battle field. This whole matter was brought up at our last cabinet meeting and each minister took Palikao's view of it so that after the sitting, a pressing message was sent to MacMahon, as you are doubtless aware, urging him to march on Metz. Here in Paris, there is a regular popular clamor to this same effect.' "

The Duc d'Abrantes has left this inedited comment on the foregoing communication: "This sounded all right on paper; but nobody at the time seems to have realized the difficulties attending this proposed 'March on Metz,' the phrase then in everybody's mouth at Paris. The Opposition was accusing the Empress of wishing to bring back the army to serve as an escort to the Emperor. 'She is ready to sacrifice 200,000 men,' the republican leaders said, 'to ensure the safety of the imperial family.' This statement was of course perfect nonsense. There was no intention of sacrificing 200,000 men, or even one man. There was no more danger in going to Paris than in marching to Verdun to aid Bazaine, whose situation, by the way, was by no means so bad as he pretended. The plan was to keep order in Paris—that was all. By saving the dynasty, the country would also be saved. But members of the Legislative Body kept saying that it would be cowardly and shameful not to help the army of the

Rhine, and pressure in this sense was brought to bear on the ministers, with the result that the best interests of the Empire and the country were sacrificed to a sentimental feeling,—a thing, by the way, that happens too often in France. I know, furthermore, that the Empress suffered acutely in the midst of all this. As regent, she did not desire to take too decided a stand. The men who surrounded her might be mistaken, she thought, but they were devoted to their country and to the Emperor, and she did not wish in any way to influence them; though the contrary was said at the time and has been often repeated since, it is not true, as everybody knows who was really behind the scenes at this period of our history."

Marshal MacMahon was at his headquarters at Courcelles, near Reims, when he was summoned to the Emperor, where he found M. Rouher, President of the Senate, who had just arrived from Paris. Before leaving the capital, M. Rouher had had several conversations with the Empress and the ministers. "I have hastened to your Majesty's side," he said to the Emperor, "to express my devotion and to learn your views on the present critical situation in order to report them to the Empress, who, I am proud to say, has much confidence in me." And in his more or less formal report to the Empress concerning this mission, portions of which were written and parts oral, and all of which was noted down carefully, a few weeks later, M. Rouher said: "Personally, I am of the opinion, I said to the Emperor, that the situation is gravely compromised, but, nevertheless I think that we ought to go to the assistance of Bazaine. I laid still more stress

on this point when, a few minutes later, I met the Marshal. I declared to the Duke of Magenta that, like Palikao, I felt that the capital was able to repel every assault, and, any way, no attack on it could be made until a certain lapse of time, for, however rapidly the Prince of Prussia might advance, he was still far away. We might still make a diversion in the direction of Metz and yet get back to Paris for any danger threatening there. I stated it as my opinion that the public would consider the other course an abandonment of the army of the Rhine, and if in the end, this army should have to capitulate or should be destroyed, the public would look upon our course as treasonable, which would have a demoralizing effect on the country at a time when we should do all in our power to encourage the popular mind. MacMahon advanced strategic arguments in opposition to my statements. Bazaine, he said, was surrounded by 200,000 men. The Prince of Saxony was in the neighborhood of Verdun with 70,000 men and the Crown Prince of Prussia was near Vitry-le-François with about 150,000 men. If the Chalons army advanced toward Metz, objected MacMahon, without the movement being made in conjunction with the army at Metz—which seemed impossible under the present circumstances —there was the great danger of this first army standing isolated and alone in the midst of active and well-armed enemies. 'And all this without doing Bazaine any good,' exclaimed the Marshal warmly. He then came out squarely in favor of the second plan, the return to Paris; and I perceived that the Emperor also preferred this move, as by the way, did M. Emile Ollivier and other strong men

at the capital. MacMahon then repeated what had often been said, that we could have an army of 300,000 men under the walls of Paris. I combated this assertion, and then the Marshal said: 'Well, it is impossible to go to the assistance of Bazaine with any chance of success, for he has neither victuals nor ammunition and will be forced to capitulate before we can do him any good. We are sure to arrive too late, believe me!' "

From Wilhelmshöhe papers, I make these extracts: "There was too much faith given to Bazaine's first reports. It was soon found out that he was both short in food supplies and in ammunition. These were, therefore, the two factors in determining what should be done. For some, this shortness was the reason for hurrying to his succor; for others, on the contrary, it was the reason for doing the very opposite. When Rouher found, as he did very soon, that neither the Emperor nor MacMahon was ready to take the responsibility of marching to Metz, he suddenly swung round and adopted the views of both. 'We must have unity in both political and military matters,' he said, 'and this, I see, we are more likely to get by the march on Paris; so I am for the march on Paris.' Thereupon, the President of the Senate advised the Emperor to nominate Marshal MacMahon generalissimo, which would annul the influence of Trochu, as the military governor of Paris would then be subordinate to MacMahon. With the Emperor holding the reins of government, backed by a man like MacMahon who would have nothing to do with the republican agitators, M. Rouher considered the situation as saved. The Emperor, the Marshal and M.

Rouher were soon agreed, even on the details of the new arrangement, and the latter set to work to draw up the decrees and proclamations necessary to carry it out. But the final approval of the council of ministers was still needed, and on reaching Paris, M. Rouher found the cabinet quite incensed over what he had been doing at Reims. General Palikao spoke out very firmly against the 'abandonment of Bazaine,' as he styled it, and we were told that his remarks produced a very deep impression on his colleagues. He re-stated his first plan,—the junction of the two armies at or near Metz,—and held as firmly as ever that this was still possible, 'if no more time were lost in hesitations.' The Empress took the same view as the cabinet, and a dispatch to this purport was immediately drawn up and sent to the Emperor. Thus, every effort was being made at Paris to prevent the execution of the plan prepared at Reims, and the question now was to know what MacMahon was going to decide between the Emperor's *opinion* and the *commands* of the ministry."

The Emperor's own notes say: "The ministerial order might have met with some hesitation on the part of MacMahon, if his actions had not been influenced by a new and unexpected event. Up to this moment, the Duke of Magenta believed that Marshal Bazaine was not only entirely surrounded, but without supplies and unable to keep up the struggle for more than two or three days at the most. He was in this state of mind when a dispatch from Bazaine reached the Emperor, arriving some hours before that from Count Palikao ordering the eastward march. The gist of this dispatch was that he (Ba-

zaine) believed he could shake off the German army and that he intended to push on toward Chalons. So of course MacMahon now thought he should go eastward and the Emperor shared his view. The latter wrote to the regent directing that the decrees drawn up in concert with M. Rouher be not published and announcing the march towards the east. All this was done before the Palikao orders reached MacMahon; and thus it happened that an inexact message from Bazaine was to lead to the greatest disaster of the campaign, so far."

General Fleury says, in an unpublished comment on the situation at this moment: "Disorder in the commands, disorder in the carrying out of the commands, disorder in everything and everywhere! Such was the situation at Chalons and Paris, and at Metz, too, for that matter, at this supreme moment in the welfare of France. At Reims, MacMahon had at first taken an independent position, which looked for a moment like flat disobedience of the orders of the cabinet. Then, of his own free will, he suddenly decided to do what the day before nobody could get him to do! At Metz, Bazaine seemed to pay no attention to the Emperor's suggestions and sent him incorrect information which misled every one and especially misled the army. In Paris, Trochu was working on his own independent lines, waiting for the moment when he should openly break with the cabinet. There was no head, no unity of action. Even if we had carried out in most perfect fashion the new plan of march eastward, we had against us terrible odds, for the enemy possessed everything that we lacked. On the German side, a single will bent under equal discipline both

general and soldier, and directed the whole strength of the whole army towards one single goal. This one fact was to do more for our enemy than all his strategy.

"I am told that when marching orders were given and it was known that the direction was Metz, great enthusiasm was manifested both by officers and men. But the Emperor did not share all these good spirits. He was somewhat pessimistic. He was disturbed by the Marshal's tendency to hastily change his mind. This time, however, MacMahon seemed to be quite fixed in his purpose. The Emperor, however, begged him not to go too far from the railway line running between Rethel and Sedan, 'which is a certain means of victualling your corps.' But little attention was paid at first to this excellent piece of advice, though later, after a loss of precious time, the rather thoughtless commander acted on the Emperor's wise counsel.

"Many months afterwards, the Emperor told me some of the things he saw and heard during those lamentable days between the departure from Reims and the surrender at Sedan. And what a tale! I give what his Majesty said as near as I can remember in his exact words, though I prefer not to put my notes between quotation marks, as I never submitted them to him for correction or rather for approval. I will present them, however, in the first person. And I ought to add that, whenever the Emperor Napoleon III spoke about the war, it was done in a broad spirit of charity towards all,—towards both the successful and the unsuccessful.

"On the 23rd of August, all the corps left the neighborhood of Reims and took up their position

on the Suippe. From the very start, you could not help being struck by the utter lack of any organization in the Chalons army. The men of the first and fifth corps were tired out by a rapid retreat and there were many laggards, while the wagon-trains blocked up the route in such a way that the weary soldiers did not reach their quarters till late in the night. The formal orders given at Reims, according to which each soldier was to carry with him four days' rations, had not been carried out, and already, before we were fairly started on our way, two corps were without food for the next day! 'Then it was that Marshal MacMahon regretted that he had not listened to my advice not to get too far away from the railway.' (These were the Emperor's exact words.) Though there was every reason for us to move with haste, it was now found necessary to lean towards the west and stop at Rethel, where the 25th was spent in revictualing the army. In three days only twelve leagues had been covered! (I put exclamation points where the Emperor's manner of voice was particularly emphatic.) In the meanwhile, the Crown Prince of Prussia, deceived by our earlier march on Reims and by a false dispatch of the minister of war and the marshal, thought the French army was retreating! And well he might, for our advance was not unlike a retreat in more ways than one! The Prince consequently continued his march on Paris, till he reached Chalons, which he of course found abandoned. It then began to dawn on the Prussian general staff that perhaps after all, we had gone to the aid of Bazaine. The Germans had a good scouting service, but the vast system of spying which the French public believed

existed, either did not exist at all—which was the case nine times out of ten—or was very much exaggerated. It was the French newspaper press that was the great spy for the Germans! Every day military events were discussed and published to the four winds of heaven, and much important information reached the German staff through the foreign journals, which copied what they saw in the Paris dailies, or through the French journals which the Uhlans found in the villages. 'I know from what I saw with my own eyes'—it is the Emperor himself who is now speaking—'that on the evening of the 25th, some Paris sheets reported the speeches delivered in the Legislative Body, all of which pointed to the absolute necessity of the Chalons army going to the rescue of Bazaine, while a London telegram informed the world that the Paris *Temps* of the 23rd stated that "MacMahon had suddenly decided to go to Bazaine's assistance, although, by doing so, he left the road to Paris open and thus compromised the safety of the country; that the entire army of Chalons had already left the neighborhood of Reims, though the news received from Montmédy did not yet mention the appearance of French troops in those parts." Thanks to indiscretions of this kind, von Moltke knew all we were doing.' During the night, the Crown Prince of Prussia received an order to check his march on Paris and the Crown Prince of Saxony was ordered to push on towards Varennes. German cavalry covered the whole country between Reims and the Meuse, advanced towards the north and soon overtook, in the neighborhood of Busancy and Grandpré, our extreme right wing; and as early as the afternoon of the 26th, our ef-

fort to cross the Meuse was being disputed. Great was our consternation when the German cavalry appeared on our right! 'And yet, we had no good ground to be surprised at this. In fact, I would have been greatly surprised if it had been otherwise!' At about the same moment, we learned that Bazaine had not left Metz on the 25th, and then the plan, which had been so hastily formed of succoring him, as hastily evaporated! And the situation of the German troops now made hopeless all thought of reaching Metz! Once more the eastward march was abandoned and the various corps were ordered to beat a retreat on Mézières. When Palikao learned this by telegraph, he was not pleased and public opinion in Paris was exasperated by it. Though the Minister of War did not order MacMahon positively to continue his eastward course, still he let him feel that that was the course which all at the capital wished him to pursue and which they believed would lead to success and prevent an uprising of the extreme parties at the capital. The Emperor said these words at this point of his narration: 'I read with the greatest consternation this dispatch from Palikao to MacMahon: "If you forsake Bazaine, there will be a revolution in Paris and you yourself will be attacked by the whole enemy's force. Paris can protect herself from any outside attack. Our fortifications are strong. It still seems to me that *the* thing to do is to reach Bazaine, cost what it may. Here everybody feels the necessity of your freeing Bazaine and your movements are followed with the greatest anxiety." '

"This statement of the minister's that 'everybody favored this march towards Bazaine,' is very ex-

aggerated—and now it is not the Emperor who is speaking, but myself—for, as I perfectly well know to be a fact, Thiers criticized it very severely in one of the sittings of the Defense Committee, while Trochu was still strongly in favor of the return of the Emperor and the Chalons army to Paris. When the terrible disaster came, Trochu exclaimed: 'Why was I not listened to?'

"I now return to my report of my conversation with the Emperor. He went on to say that those holding radical ideas seemed to prevail and the fatal eastward march was insisted upon. MacMahon, who at this crisis was hesitation and changeableness personified, now countermanded the orders he had issued a few hours before. At eight o'clock he disobeyed the instructions of the Minister of War without consulting him, by changing the direction of the army's march, and then at eleven, he suddenly obeyed him by calling back the troops and the trains! Nobody appeared to know which was the better course. And all this was going on almost in the very presence of the enemy! And what an enemy! This vacillation and countermanding went on increasing from hour to hour. The Duke of Magenta showed irresolution both when he was trying to succor Bazaine or when he was shrinking from that duty. In the meantime, he began a march on the Meuse. 'I plainly saw the danger of this last move, and did what I could to prevent it. I immediately sent my aide-de-camp, the Prince de la Moskowa, to point out to the Marshal that nothing forced him to obey the suggestion made by the Minister of War; that in the presence of controlling events, he could act on his own account; that, so far as I was concerned,

I left him entirely free to do as he saw fit; that I considered it very dangerous to lead the army further eastward and that to me, a retreat towards Mézières would be far more preferable. The marshal did not like to receive advice, and during this lamentable affair he turned a deaf ear to what I then said as he had to what I had said before and sent back this reply: 'I have carefully weighed the pros and the cons, and I still think it wiser to march eastward.' Unfortunately as has just been said, the preceding orders were already being executed, and the whole army in the evening of the 27th, was in full retreat toward Mézières, when suddenly it became necessary to retrace these weary steps. It is easy to imagine what confusion ensued, especially as the roads were bad. No wonder, then, that the army made but six or seven miles, in the new direction, towards the Meuse, before camping late in the night.

"A good example of the unpreparedness of everything was shown at Stonne, where we learnt that the Stenay bridge was broken down and that the whole Chalons army was unprovided with a pontoon service! So the Marshal had to abandon the idea of reaching Stenay and to cross the Meuse at Mouzon and Remilly. The weather was magnificent after the ceaseless rain of the preceding days, and the regiments crossed the bridges with their bands playing, the strains of the joyous music re-echoing through the valleys. A few hours more and the whole Chalons army would be safe at Montmédy, the long wished for goal. But alas! precious time had been lost and suddenly the terrible Germans were down upon us! Panic, fighting, loss, retreat ensued. The

artillery and baggage trains were in an inextricable muddle. The army spreading along the Meuse from Sedan to Carignan and separated from the enemy only by the river, which had already been crossed in several places, was exposed to a dreadful catastrophe. At length we were brought face to face with that immense German army which we had been doing our best to evade. The impossibility of joining Bazaine in the neighborhood of Montmédy was now more than ever evident. So again MacMahon changed his plans. He had to satisfy the most pressing demand—that of reorganizing his disordered troops and revictualling them. So he decided to bend round to Sedan, leaving for the future what he should do after that. So the retreat of the whole French army began forthwith and continued all night. Terrible confusion prevailed and great were the losses of every kind. The rest of the sad story is too well known."

CHAPTER X

GENERAL CHANGARNIER AND THE SECOND EMPIRE

It was always one of the fond hopes of the Emperor Napoleon III that the body of élite who at first declined to accept the Second Empire would gradually abandon their uncompromising position and come over to the existing régime. He did not even despair of the republicans, and his hopes were not always disappointed in that direction. Dr. Thomas W. Evans writes in one of his unpublished manuscripts: "The Emperor once said to me at Chislehurst: 'I think there are some republicans who are honest in their belief. There is Dufaure, for instance. He is thoroughly convinced that republicanism is the right thing. He is perfectly sincere in this conviction. I tried harder than with anybody else to attract him to my government. But I did not succeed in my efforts, though he was not a republican then. I respect him for remaining true to his ideals, though I should have been glad to have made him a minister during the Empire.' "

But all French politicians were not like M. Dufaure; and it was felt at the Tuileries that others could be moved. The Emperor had much good ground for holding to this opinion, for it is what always happens in France, provided the Government lasts long enough and is conducted with brilliancy; and this is what was slowly but surely com-

ing to pass in the case of the Second Empire when the unfortunate war of 1870 suddenly checked this rapidly growing movement and destroyed the Imperial State.

Though it cannot be said that that brilliant and energetic officer, General Changarnier, was thinking of accepting a régime which he had always combated openly and vigorously still, after his conduct during the war of 1870, if that conflict had been a victory instead of a defeat, he would unquestionably, like several other hesitating minds, have come over to the Empire, and the whole country, almost to a man, would have stood shoulder to shoulder behind the Government, and thus would have been realized one of the dearest wishes of the Emperor. General Changarnier's course during the war deserves to be described both on account of the man himself, no ordinary character, and on account of the fine example which it offers of the most elevated and disinterested patriotism.

As soon as it became known that war had been declared, General Changarnier broke through his long silence and immediately offered his services to the Government. The Minister of War, Marshal Le Boeuf, said to him: "I am much moved by your request, and I sincerely hope the Emperor will grant it. I am going to St. Cloud for the purpose of giving it my warm personal support." But the Emperor did not receive the proposal with much favor, for in the month of February previous, he had offered to make Changarnier a marshal, saying: "I desire to add your great name to the glories of my reign." When it is remembered how keen was Changarnier's ambition in the past, the effort which he

had to make to decline this tempting offer will be realized. But he feared, if he accepted it, the adverse criticism of his Orleanist friends, and he held that it would put him in a contradictory position, he, who had so ardently opposed the Empire, thus becoming one of its marshals. The high distinction then offered to Changarnier was conferred on General Le Boeuf. So the Emperor did not feel that he could now accept Changarnier's offer of services. But the Minister of War wrote him: "If any vacancy should occur, I will not forget that you spontaneously offered the Emperor, not only your sword, but the military experience which you have acquired during a brilliant career at the front."

This letter made it possible for Changarnier to feel that he was not absolutely pushed aside, and that he might yet obtain what he desired. But it should also be borne in mind that General Changarnier was then an old man, seventy-seven years of age; that he had been long out of the active army, although remarkably well acquainted with everything that occurred there, and that, notwithstanding, his acknowledged ability and unquestioned popularity, if younger men had been pushed aside to make a place for this veteran, there would have been much heart-burning in some quarters. Yet, some of those who would have complained in the summer of 1870, regretted later than Changarnier was not in active service at the front. They recalled Marshal Bugeaud's remark of twenty-five years before: "Of all the officers under my orders, Changarnier is the most capable in real warfare."

The old general felt sorely hurt at the declining of his services, and said to one of his friends: "I

feel much cut up over this and I am off to the country to hide my sorrow, though I ought to know that the valiant army of France has so many experienced leaders that the absence of an old patriot like me will hardly be noticed. Our dear soldiers will be victorious anywhere and everywhere." He withdrew to Autun, where he anxiously awaited the course of events. Those who were in his intimacy at this time declare that he was well aware of the true effectiveness of the French army at this moment and knew that the French mobilization could not be accomplished till a month after that of Prussia, while he held that he had ground for believing that no help could be expected from Austria or Italy. So when he heard of the repulse at Wisembourg on August 4, 1870, he determined to leave for Paris. At the moment of his departure and all along the route to the capital he was cheered by crowds. He called at the War Office and the following evening was at Metz, where he was immediately received by the Emperor, to whom he said in gallant form: "Sire, I was not a courtier in the time of your good fortune, but under the present circumstances, I consider it my duty and that I am in honor bound to offer an example of fealty to the chief of state." The Emperor, who used to refer to this interview, in after years, was much moved by it, and stretching out his hand to the old general, said: "I am deeply touched by your faithfulness, and though there is no post vacant, we all want you to remain with us and give us the aid of your valuable advice." The Emperor then explained to him the situation, called in Marshal Le Boeuf, answered the questions asked by Changarnier and finally had the veteran

escorted to the dining-room where he took some refreshments with the officers of the imperial household.

All Metz welcomed the new arrival with every mark of respect and confidence. There was certainly something picturesque in the coming of this aged soldier, attired in civilian clothes, without any command and probably to remain without any. He made a deep impression and his name awakened considerable enthusiasm, not an unimportant thing in those days of depression. His presence was a spark of hope and it was pleasant to see this former political adversary now reconciled to the Emperor and to the régime. So he received an extraordinary welcome. He visited the 3rd and 4th army corps at Faulquemont, accompanied by the Emperor, and was greeted by the troops most enthusiastically. It was a curious sight, this veteran in frock-coat and low hat, riding along the line of regiments where he was at once recognized and cheered by the men. As they returned to Metz in the evening, he was again much acclaimed. In the immediate circle of the Emperor, he was also in great favor; but in spite of all these honors, General Changarnier was not given a commission, and it was evident that he was to be treated only as "a military counsellor." And yet at this same moment public opinion demanded that changes be made in the chief command. Thiers who was maneuvering in parliamentary circles, wanted Bazaine and Palikao nominated to high posts. So naturally in such a crisis, people asked why something was not done with Changarnier. But he has not even got a uniform, answered his critics. But this objection was easily removed.

Marshal Le Boeuf lent him a cap, Prince Joachim Murat came forward with a tunic, and others belonging to the staff furnished him epaulets. In the meantime, in response to pressing telegrams from Paris, Le Boeuf was deprived of the generalissimoship. "But I will be a party to no other changes," exclaimed the Emperor; "Charles I. did not save himself by sacrificing Strafford." And all this time "the consulting lawyer, Changarnier" was in a very peculiar position. He was entered on the army list of the 3rd corps after the name of the commander-in-chief, as "General Changarnier, friend of the Marshal." The Marshal referred to was Le Boeuf, with whom he was present at the battle of Vionville, on August 16th, when the Germans were held in check, but when we obtained no real advantage owing to the fact that the 4th corps had been left by Bazaine without any support, and being unable to advance, the 3rd corps was also condemned to inaction. Changarnier urgently suggested that Marshal Bazaine take advantage of the success gained and make a strong attack on the morrow, but his advice was disregarded. On the 17th and 18th, he was also present at the disastrous battle of Gravelotte, remaining in the saddle for hours at a time, regardless of danger, though the forelegs of his horse were shot off by a shell. "Bazaine had the misfortune not to be present at those memorable engagements," was the mild way in which Changarnier put it. Though both he and Le Boeuf called for a forward movement, the contrary was ordered, and back the army was carried to the walls of Metz and its doom.

But these were not the only wonderful exploits of this remarkable old soldier. On August 31st, he

accompanied two divisions of the 3rd corps and throwing himself into the thickest of the fray, encouraged the men to fresh efforts, and they responded with loud cheers. At nine that morning, his horse had been wounded by a ball which killed a captain at his side. In the end, he and the army had to return to Metz, whence he always held it was possible to escape, if an energetic effort had been made to do so. "Though the first and second days' fighting would be tough," he said, "still the move would be crowned with success if Marshal Bazaine had raised the moral energy of the troops, discouraged by so many useless and incoherent efforts. Then the *mens divinior* would have animated all ranks, from the chief to the drummer boy, and we would have made a breach by which we would have penetrated as far as Langres and thence into the valley of the Seine."

Gradually Changarnier became the center of a party who admired his courage and considered his advice the essence of wisdom. Some of the more ardent members of this group were determined to get Bazaine deposed and Changarnier put in his place, as general-in-chief of the army of the Rhine. The plan was formed by General Clinchant and it was communicated to Changarnier by Captain Rossel, who afterwards played a part in the Paris Commune. Changarnier was most indignant. The mere thought of a military sedition put him in a rage, and the idea of his being made the center and cause of it drove him beyond all bounds. He ordered Rossel to leave his presence, though he promised to keep the matter secret, and advised him to aban-

don all such wild schemes. A few hours later another and higher officer came to him with much the same proposal, when Changarnier said to him: "Marshal Bazaine has done nothing as I should have done it. That is true. I have not the slightest sympathy for him. Why, day before yesterday I went to see him in order to draw his attention to the merits and excellent services of General Valazé. But he treated me with cold politeness and seemed embarrassed in my presence. I make no doubt that he heard before I did of this conspiracy. He is no coward and has in his power the means of preventing his being made a prisoner or killed. I don't pretend to be modest. I know that I possess strategical talent to a greater degree than any of the generals in this army. We are not well commanded. The fact is too patent to be denied. But that is no reason why we should do a dishonorable thing like this one which is proposed to me."

Though this conspiracy did not make much stir at the moment, it was not wholly abandoned; for at the end of September, Captain Rossel again came to General Changarnier, this time accompanied by another officer and told him that the army was on the eve of an insurrection and that it put all its trust in him. This time Changarnier was not content to scold. He simply handed the two conspirators over to the proper authorities. They were brought before Bazaine, who sharply reprimanded them and sent them to prison, where they remained until the capitulation of Metz.

The army in Metz continued to hope vainly for release until October 24, 1870, when Prince Fred-

erick Charles, who commanded the German forces around Metz, made known to Bazaine the helplessness of his situation. The next day the French Marshal called a council of war to which General Changarnier was invited. The situation was such that it was decided to ask for an armistice, during which the town could be revictualled, and to request that permission be given to take the army to Algeria, where it could be paroled. Marshal Canrobert proposed that Changarnier be made their envoy to the German camp. Though it made his brave heart bleed to accept such a mission, he felt that it was his duty to do so, and he consented. When Prince Frederick Charles was requested to receive him, the German general replied that, notwithstanding the uncertain character of Changarnier's position, he would waive all rules of etiquette and thus "give the celebrated warrior a proof of the great esteem he felt for him and a mark of deep consideration for the valiant French army." So the French general had a courteous reception at German headquarters and nothing was said that could in any way jar on the patriotic and loyal feelings of the veteran, who being of a decidedly free and open temperament would not have borne any slight or insinuation. "If it had been otherwise," he once remarked, "our interview, which lasted three hours, would not have lasted three minutes!"

During these three hours many things were said. Changarnier used to like to repeat this part of the conversation.

Prince Charles: "On August 16th, you advised a flanking movement on the right wing; but your suggestion was not acted upon."

Changarnier: "If it had been, the German army would have been in a plight!"

Prince Charles: "Quite true; we would have all been thrown in the Moselle."

On October 29th, Changarnier and the Prince met again:

Prince Charles: "I gave the King the gist of our interview and he was much interested in what you said. Would you go to Versailles? I would make it very easy for you to get there, and the journey might result in much good."

Changarnier: "In whose name should I go? I am not authorized to speak for the Government of National Defense, for the Regent nor for the Count of Chambord. I could act only in my own name, for I do not represent France in any way."

Prince Charles: "But M. Thiers is at this moment visiting all the courts of Europe."

Changarnier: "Yes, and he is so clever that he will make all France believe that he is serving the country's best interests by his efforts."

At this moment, Marshal Canrobert entered the room, and Prince Charles repeated to him what he had just said to Changarnier concerning his going to Versailles. "I cannot urge too strongly this course," he said. But Changarnier made a stiff refusal. "It was evident that on this occasion, as on so many others," said the general later, "the Prussian Government was trying to make a double play. It made me think of Alexander I pretending to be treating with Napoleon, during the campaign of 1814, when the allies were all the time gaining victories, while the Czar kept repeating to the Em-

peror: 'The fortune of war is always so uncertain!' "

Frederick Charles knew full well that a majority of the French nation at that very moment would have preferred a treaty of peace made with the Emperor rather than with anybody else; that the dynasty, though overthrown, had deep roots in the country, and that it would perhaps be to the interest of everybody to do nothing to prevent its restoration. At this moment, too, the German Government, as Prince Charles was aware, was making efforts to negotiate with the Empress through one of her representatives, M. Theophile Gautier, at Versailles. "They were ever careful," said Changarnier, "to have several strings to their bow in order to obtain the best possible advantages for Prussia."

General Changarnier was preparing to start for Frankfort-on-the-Main, which he had chosen as his place of detention, when an aide-de-camp from Prince Frederick Charles brought him a passport which made it possible for him to seek refuge in a neutral state without his being asked to give a parole of any kind. So the general went to Brussels, arriving there on November 2, 1870. He was in most straitened circumstances. He had only his military clothes, and his purse was too short to buy others. He settled in a modest apartment in the Rue Fossé aux Loups, where shortly afterwards he received a letter from the Emperor thanking him for his valiant conduct and great services at Metz.

At this troubled moment, the last hopes of a large body of men turned towards General Changarnier. Many felt that a political scheme might have a good chance of success in which Changarnier could be

induced to take a prominent, if not a predominant part. Members of the Emperor's immediate circle shared Napoleon's opinion that the Empire might be restored under certain circumstances. Letters reached Wilhelmshöhe from all parts of France, urging the Emperor to return to power. But the question was whether the army would support him. There was some uncertainty about this, for there were many different currents of opinion then agitating military circles. But there can be no doubt that at one moment, the Emperor had good ground for believing that he would be welcomed by the soldier, the artisan and the peasant, and that the quicker he acted, the more likely would be the success of the effort. M. Franceschini Pietri, who was the Emperor's confidential private secretary and who filled the same post in Eugénie's household, wrote as follows, at this time, to a friend: "The news of a great reaction spreading all over France and generally favorable to the Emperor is being confirmed daily. The country people are unanimous in their attachment to the Emperor, but unfortunately the same thing cannot be said of the inhabitants of the towns." This opinion of M. Pietri was quite correct, and the same impression was received by the Empress; and facts which came to light at a much later period prove that this was not a mistaken view.

But perhaps it was going a little too far to place such great hopes in General Changarnier. It is true that he had recently shown a very friendly feeling for the Emperor, but would this carry him to the point of aiding in an Imperial restoration? The Empress always looked with much scepticism on

this scheme and the later career of the general seemed to show that she was not far wrong in her view; nor did the Emperor towards the end of his life, disagree with her on this point. It should be remembered, furthermore, that Changarnier was influenced by his Orleanist friendships and that he was exceedingly ambitious. Though he had suffered his ambition to slumber during a long period, now, in the autumn of life, it might revive and he might be tempted to try and play a prominent part which circumstances prevented him from playing during the Presidency of Louis Napoleon and which wounded pride forbade him to play during the Empire. Anyway, the subject was broached to him during November and December, 1870, while he was residing in Brussels, the celebrated Countess Walewska, widow of the former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Second Empire, being extremely active in the matter, supported by several other leading Imperialists, such as the Duc d'Albuféra, Marshal Canrobert and M. Levert, the active Bonapartist deputy.

At the end of December, Countess Walewska wrote to a friend these lines, which are here published for the first time: "Here is Changarnier's plan: He would enter Paris, and get somebody—I don't know whom—to nominate him Minister of War or Military Governor of the city, and, having reëstablished order, that is to say, after arresting or exiling the whole band of present rascals, call together an assembly. He said: 'The time is drawing near when something must be done; Paris is going to surrender and then serious negotiations must be undertaken.' Breaking off, he continued:

'Where is President Schneider?' 'In London,' I repeated. 'Perhaps the former Chamber might be brought together at Amiens.' I repeat what I have always held, viz., that Changarnier will not commit himself. He declares that he would have no authority if he acted in the Emperor's name. But if others lead the way and if Prussia offers better terms, he will not oppose the reëstablishment of the Empire, but he personally cannot bring back the Emperor. I found him in great perplexity over the whole situation. He has received letters from Paris in which it is stated that all is up with Trochu and that the only hope is in Vinoy, which choice pleases him. He said to me: 'The Emperor ought to have made me Governor of Paris or Minister of War. If he had done so, the Empress would still be on the throne. After the offers I had made, he ought to have done something for me and considered me an honorable man. But all that is ancient history. Let us look at the future.' I do not know what to make of it all, but this is certain, Changarnier is not going into this thing blindly, and is determined, if possible, to play the chief part,—that is to say, without the Emperor and with the Prince Imperial and the Regent-Empress."

Changarnier was cautiously watching events, while waiting for the right time to come to decide what he would do. He was weighing the pros and cons, exchanging views with different persons and studying the question to see if the part he was to play suited him. He would not make up his mind quickly, and would not enter upon a course that his friends would reprove. In the meanwhile, the Emperor sent him a very able and zealous supporter

of the Imperial cause, M. Levert, mentioned above, whose mission was to talk matters over with the aged general. The principal parts of the important interviews which M. Levert had with General Changarnier are given below and are taken from the unpublished report which was sent to the Emperor by M. Levert.

"At the first meeting, I confined my attention to general statements, speaking chiefly of the chances which existed of reëstablishing the Empire immediately after the peace.

"Changarnier: 'Who will sign this peace?'

"Levert: 'The Emperor cannot sign it, as he is a prisoner; but the Regency remains standing, and there will surely be found some devoted citizen, who, animated by patriotic sentiments, will, like the Duke of Richelieu in 1814 consent to place his signature at the foot of a treaty, painful though it be, but which will put an end to the evils from which the country is suffering.'

"Changarnier: 'But who will he be?'

"Levert: 'You, perhaps, general.'

"Changarnier: 'I know Prince Frederick Charles and have some influence with him. I saw him five times. But then I have no power. No one has entrusted me with this mission and before I could act I must be authorized by some one to act. And do you really believe in the Emperor's return to power?'

"Levert: 'I not only believe it, I am certain of it. All over the country the people are saying: "The Emperor has been betrayed." The reaction is evident, it is palpable.'

"Changarnier: 'That's quite true. I have re-

ceived letters saying the same thing, and it has been told me, too. But how is the Emperor?'

"Levert: 'His Majesty bears his captivity with a dignified resignation, and a moral courage which you know.'

"Changarnier: 'Does he wish to return to power?'

"Levert: 'Not for himself, general. The disappointments, injustice, and calumnies which he has endured lately do not make him regret the loss of the crown. But he considers it his duty to return to power. He wishes to repair as far as he can, the ruins caused by the war. And besides, he does not feel free to abandon to the agitations of the present and to the uncertainty of the future the eight millions of men who confide in him.'

"Changarnier: 'The task will not be a light one.'

"Levert: 'No, and that is why he counts on the assistance of all worthy men to enable him to accomplish it.'

"Changarnier: 'He will find many opposing parties facing him.'

"Levert: 'Four months of misery and the fear of the unknown make parties reflect deeply. And the will of the nation may make itself heard again. The Emperor could once more secure a favorable plebiscite.'

"Changarnier: 'Yes, I agree with you, he would still have a majority of the nation with him.'

"Levert: 'And if certain persons gave us trouble, Paris has not forgotten, general, how well you restored order and secured tranquillity on another occasion.'

"Changarnier: 'I should like to see you again and

continue this conversation. I shall expect you at my house on Sunday.' "

After that interview, Changarnier went to see Princess Mathilde, related the whole conversation to her which she hastened to write to the Emperor. She did not overlook the difficulties of the enterprise or Changarnier's hesitation to begin. But her opinion was that the matter should not be abandoned; on the contrary, it should be conducted with the greatest care. So on Sunday, M. Levert kept his engagement, and his report continues as follows:

"Changarnier has had time to weigh matters. But he is still determined to say neither Yes or No. He passed the different questions in review.

"Changarnier: 'You know, it will be no easy task to conduct peace negotiations in the Prussian camp. It is a great responsibility to assume. Do you know what their conditions will be?'

"Levert: 'That will probably depend largely on the cleverness of the negotiator. But in any case, the conditions will be more favorable for the Empire than for any other form of government.'

"Changarnier: 'Why?'

"Levert: 'Because the King of Prussia, who, in spite of his declarations to the contrary, has a very friendly feeling for the Emperor, will treat only with the greatest reluctance with the Republic.'

"Changarnier: 'I understand that. But how does he feel towards the others?'

"Levert: 'I see no "others" but the Orleans princes, and they have no standing as pretenders. Moreover, reigning sovereigns take no interest in giving encouragement to younger branches.'

"Changarnier: 'That strikes me as true. But what will the conditions practically be?'

"Levert: 'It is said, general, that Prussia will leave us Lorraine and will take only a part of Alsace.'"

This remark of M. Levert may be questioned, for at that date an aide-de-camp of the Emperor wrote to a friend, stating that Prussia would not yield an iota in the matter of Alsace. The report continues, M. Levert being the speaker:

"'As regards the conditions, however, it is impossible to say exactly what they will be.'

"Changarnier: 'I know Prussia is tired of the war. But if we abandon Alsace, the country will never forgive the Emperor. It would make his return to power next to an impossibility. But it would not have the same effect on the prospects of the Prince Imperial. But leaving this Alsace matter out of the question, how do you propose that the Emperor should return? Yes, I admit that the peasants will vote for him. The name of Napoleon has not lost its prestige. But what I do not see is the means by which the Emperor is to get back. It is the proceeding itself that puzzles me.'

"Levert: 'When the cause is good, the way is easy. Glance at the various possibilities. Admit for a moment that Bourbaki's movement towards the east should not succeed and that, after her heroic efforts, Paris, which has kept up the honor of France, should be reduced to the sad extremity of capitulation. At that same moment peace preliminaries might be signed with the representatives of the Regent, and the Regency, which still exists legally, would return to Paris. Then, from the capital of

the nation, the Empress would address a proclamation to the French people and call upon them to vote for peace. This act would be a new vote of confidence in the Empire and the Emperor would immediately take up the reins of government.'

"Changarnier: 'And what troops would protect the Empress? She must not put herself under the protection of the Prussians.'

"Levert: 'No, of course not; the Prussians will have nothing to do in the matter. We shall have other forces.'

"Changarnier: 'Where will you get them?'

"Levert: 'In twenty-four hours we could have 4,000 soldiers standing in the court of the Tuileries, —the 4,000 policemen who were hooted and driven away on September 4th, brave men who have remained faithful, and who were careful to keep their uniform and sword. Then there are the three squadrons of mounted police, who are pretty sure not to be influenced by the capitulation; and finally, we could call for volunteers. This would do for the first few hours. Furthermore, it is not likely that Paris will think of insurrections at such a moment.'

"Changarnier: 'Yes, that might mount up to twelve or fifteen thousand men, and if the republicans try to make a row in the provinces, I will attend to them. The army would have to be re-organized immediately. There must be no weakness shown towards those officers who have just published in the *Independence Belge* that unsoldierly protest against the conduct of the war. It is a disgrace.'

"Levert: 'But I think mercy should be shown

to some of them, General. For instance, a few days ago I was at Cologne, and met there by chance three captains who were prisoners of war. Two of them had signed that protest and yet they said to me: "When will the Emperor be released? When he enters Paris, we want to be by his side, pistol in hand. Here are our names; we wish him to know it. Many of our fellow officers, who lost their heads momentarily, think as we do. We signed that document in a moment of thoughtlessness, in the hopes that it might help to bring about peace." '

"Changarnier: 'There must be no mistakes made. As leaders of this return policy, we need new men, —young and vigorous. There must be an energetic ministry. The Emperor is in error if he thinks his old staff will do.'

"Levert: 'I think the Emperor holds the same view on this point as you do.'

"Changarnier: 'Suppose Paris, once herself again should demand the calling together of a Constituent Assembly? This is highly probable. What are you going to do about it? And if, at this moment, we only knew what is going on in Paris! That is the all-important factor in the whole problem. But we must wait to learn this. People come to me with overtures, but I can assure you I have so far made no promises to anybody. I cannot make any to-day, either; but I will think the whole question over.'

"In our first conversation, I did not fail to tell the general how much the Emperor admired his character and his services, nor to point out how greatly he would add to the glory of his career by aiding in the restoration of the only government

capable of saving the country. It is perfectly evident that General Changarnier is desirous above all of playing an important part in the events of the day. That is why he seems to prefer a regency, which would place him, he hopes, in the front rank. With the Emperor, his position would necessarily be more limited. He feels that and will accept our proposals only at the last moment and if more advantageous offers are not forthcoming. He is waiting to see what is going to happen. He is anxious about Paris public opinion. He is conscious of his importance and wishes to make the most of it, but always with the most praiseworthy of intentions and objects, of course. He is thoroughly honorable, and I am convinced that he has not, as he has repeatedly assured me, made any promises to anybody, and that when the proper time comes, a direct intervention on the part of the Emperor couched in the right terms, will overcome all his hesitation."

M. Levert concludes his report with these lines: "Now what is the real advantage in having the support of this venerable old man? He is respected and even loved by a part of the Paris upper-class. The energy which he showed in suppressing the disorders in 1848 is not forgotten, and his is the only name which has survived the military wreck of the last few months. It is felt that no one better than he could bring the country to a peace. For these reasons, he is a trump card in our hand, though, at the same time, we should not exaggerate the importance of it."

The proposal did indeed please General Changarnier. To be made marshal of France and to be the right arm of the Imperial Government with a

restored regency would be a fine crowning of his public career, especially as at the same time, he would have rendered a true service to the country and have obtained terms of peace much less onerous than those which were finally granted. But he was an old royalist and naturally hesitated to openly declare himself an imperialist. If he listened to the plan as it was laid before him by M. Levert, it was because he saw therein a real interest for the country, and not simply the satisfying of his own ambition. In fact, it was these two opposing attractions which made him hesitate, even if the obstacles in the way of realization had not struck him as being very difficult to surmount.

General Changarnier was approached in the same manner as he had been approached by M. Levert, by both the Comte de Chambord and the Orleans Princes. But he felt that they were not popular, which is the reason he made them no promises. However, was this a sufficient reason for returning to the Empire whose fall was so recent? The catastrophe had been so complete that the idea of reestablishing the fallen dynasty might well strike him as over-bold. On the other hand, the foundations of the Empire were firm and that form of government agreed too well with the secret wishes of the great majority of the nation, to render the attempt of a restoration too chimerical. And all felt that General Changarnier alone could carry the effort through to a successful issue. It is easy to understand, therefore, that in spite of the hesitation and wavering of the general, every effort was made to obtain his consent to make the attempt. Though M. Levert and Countess Walewska had failed, there

were others in the reserve who were ready to continue the attempt. At Wilhelmshöhe, it was not considered that the game was lost. The imprisoned Emperor listened to many plans of which General Changarnier was the central figure.

General Frossard favored a plan including the regency of Changarnier with the Prince Imperial alone, without the Empress after the abdication of the Emperor. The Duke de Persigny wrote that abdication was necessary, as a Regency Council would be established for the Prince Imperial. But he did not say who this regent would be. Was he reserving this post for himself? Comte Olympe Aguado was also for the putting forward of the Prince Imperial with Changarnier and Thiers as regents. Comte Aguado arrived from Brussels and voiced the opinion of the members of the French colony exiled in that town: "But did he not make a great mistake to imagine that Thiers would agree to work for anyone but himself?" was the question put by one of those in the Emperor's circle. Comte de Bouville held that the regency should be intrusted to the Empress Eugénie. The current of opinion in England and Belgium was evidently in favor of the Emperor's abdication. Such was not the advice, however, of Pietri, Corvisart, the Emperor's medical man, and many of the aides-de-camp, whose unpublished correspondence give important details concerning the events of this moment. And Comte Adolphe Clary, who had also reached Wilhelmshöhe via London, performed several secret missions to the German authorities to learn what were their opinions of the situation; for, unfortunately, nothing could be undertaken at this time without

first ascertaining what was the conqueror's view of the matter.

The Emperor was very much embarrassed in the midst of all these conflicting opinions. He was not yet convinced of the necessity for his abdication, and he was adverse to acting in this matter before obtaining the best advice. One of his aides-de-camp has declared that it would have been difficult to get the Emperor to consent to his abdication. But this assertion is too strong, in the light of the fact that somewhat later the Emperor declared how little he cared for the crown, *per se*. But before he took a definite position, he wished to know exactly how he was to be replaced on the throne, if he vacated it. "Nor was the Regency of the Empress such a sure way out of the difficulty," he is reported to have said, "for it is not so sure that she would have accepted the difficult post as many of them seemed to think. Though she was not opposed to negotiations on these points, she was even less optimistic as to the results than were we at Wilhelmshöhe." What the Emperor here says concerning the Empress is quite true.

During all this time, General Changarnier was in the foreground. On January 14, 1871, he was much surprised to receive a visit from Prince Napoleon, who announced his departure for London, where he was to meet persons who might have influence on Count Bismarck. Changarnier was as reserved with the Prince as he had been with the former envoys. But this did not prevent the negotiations from being again taken up at the end of January by one of the Emperor's aides-de-camp, General Fleury, who had often been charged with diplomatic mis-

sions, and whom the Emperor trusted entirely. He was instructed to propose squarely that the Emperor be replaced on the throne through the efforts of Changarnier. All the other schemes having failed, Napoleon now decided to act himself. General Fleury said:

"The Emperor thinks with your aid, he can help France out of her present difficulties. Without you, I think he will abandon every plan. He knows that you are not willing to negotiate with the Prussians while they are fighting against France. But he does not ask you to do this. A certain person whose name need not be mentioned, but for whom Bismarck has a liking, will conduct this side of the affair. It is possible that we may be able to save Lorraine. But what is very important is that we should arrange our plan before the fall of Paris. This is what we should propose: The treaty agreed upon will be promulgated the day following the end of the siege, but the Emperor will not hasten to enter the city. He will first stop at Compiègne, probably. He will have the legislative body ratify the treaty and will then call together a new assembly. The management of home affairs will be entirely left to you, with any title you may choose to assume, such as Lieutenant of the Empire, Prime Minister, or something else. If you refuse this offer, which we trust your patriotism will not permit, France will very shortly be a prey to open anarchy."

Again General Changarnier declined to commit himself. "It is quite true that the situation of the country is very bad," he said; "and for this very reason the return of the Emperor is highly probable. But I am asked to be the prime mover in this

return to power, not in the form of a regency, but in the person of the Emperor himself. But I do not feel that I can assume such a responsibility, for I do not know how much of the blame for the recent catastrophe will be laid to the charge of the Empire. Furthermore, I am restrained from doing this because it would mean my breaking with my friends."

Thus, patriotism, personal ambition, everything in short yielded before the fear of offending old party alliances. The interview came to an end here. General Fleury returned to Wilhelmshöhe, where it was at length realized that nothing could be done with General Changarnier. It was an unpleasant experience, but the Emperor always felt that he had done only his duty in trying in every way and with every person to save the situation and to put the Empire on its feet once more. If all of the friends of the fallen régime had labored with the energy and the largeness of view of the Emperor and his circle the history of France since the year 1870, might have been very different.

CHAPTER XI

GENERAL TROCHU IN PARIS

One of the very important questions to be settled at the camp of Chalons—more important than that of the governorship of Paris—was where was to be sent the army which had just been handed over by the Emperor to Marshal MacMahon, acting under the orders of Marshal Bazaine.

The Emperor's manuscript notes, from which quotations have already been made in these memoirs, continue as follows on these points:

"General Trochu was in favor of an immediate withdrawal of this army to the walls of Paris. He reminded me of a letter which he had sent to General de Waubert de Genlis, in which my attention was called to certain suggestions. I then recalled that in this communication, General Trochu proposed that Paris be taken as the center of operations, that all the available troops be gathered together there and that, with the help of the forts and ramparts and all the support which could be brought in from the country round-about, the capital be converted into a formidable fortress. When this plan was laid before Marshal MacMahon, who did not seem very enthusiastic about it, he got out of the difficulty by saying: 'It is impossible for me to act on my own responsibility, as I now take my orders from Marshal Bazaine.'

"In the meantime, General Trochu had reached Paris. Then I informed the government of the regent that I, too, was thinking of doing the same thing and asked for their views on this question. Matters had reached such a crisis, that I did not wish to take such a decided step unless it met with the approval of the ministers. But in Paris this question was not viewed in the same light as at Chalons. Even at that early date, the thought of my return appeared to cause considerable alarm. Frightened by the restlessness which seemed to have seized upon the population of Paris, the ministers were fearful lest some ground might be furnished for a sudden uprising, and, as a friend at Paris wrote me at the time, very frankly, 'the return of the vanquished Emperor to the metropolis would, in their eyes, determine just such an outbreak as they dreaded.' At the same moment, the Empress wrote me these words: 'Though I am troubled about your own safety and that of our son, still I think, with General Palikao and the other ministers, that it is wiser for you at this moment to remain in the provinces, much as I should like to have you at my side. They foresee numberless complications, insurrectionary movements and perhaps the eventual dissolution of the Legislative Body. We may have to have recourse to arms to keep control here. We doubt if we have still sufficient prestige to re-establish the authoritative system of former days and have public opinion on our side. We have very few troops here, and what is worse, the battalions of the Seine Mobiles are getting restive and we fear are going to give us trouble. Would it not be wiser, therefore, to leave the government with its present

rather anonymous character, which has at least one advantage, viz., that of awakening neither anger nor fear in the ranks of the Opposition?"

General Trochu has left a manuscript note which bears on this same problem: "Recollection of the Hundred Days was present in all our minds. When Napoleon III proposed to return to Paris after heavy reverses, we could not help recalling what happened after Waterloo. We remembered how, when Napoleon I entered the Elysée Palace in order to force the rebellious to submission, his efforts were paralyzed by the unfriendly attitude of the Chambers and the open hostility of politicians."

There was truth in all this and much to be said on both sides of the perplexing problem. The Emperor tired, worn out, even ill, had surrendered all command and felt that he was useless to the army, almost a hindrance, in fact. "An ill-fated sovereign," as one of the best-known members of the diplomatic corps truly said to the Empress at the time, almost with tears in his eyes, for he much loved the Emperor, "tossed about between the opinions of one party and another, yet, being then a constitutional ruler, unable to come to any decision not sanctioned by his ministers, who are miles away!" As late as August 18th, he was still decided to return to the capital, and the date of his departure was fixed for the 19th. Then he and his friends hesitated, and he finally concluded to remain with the army, "a grave mistake," as the diplomat already referred to remarked when he heard of the decision. Perhaps it was a mistake; but the Empress did not think so at the time, and she never changed her mind on this point.

General Trochu reached Paris shortly before midnight on August 19th, and went straight to the Home Office, where he found M. Henri Chevreau, Minister of the Interior, to whom he showed the decree naming him (General Trochu) military governor of Paris. The general asked that it be immediately printed in the official journal. The minister told the Empress later that he did not try to hide his profound astonishment at this "nomination," and it awakened in her mind considerable anxiety. The Minister said to General Trochu: "I cannot take the responsibility of printing the Emperor's decree until I shall have consulted my colleagues of the cabinet. I must have it countersigned by a minister." But General Trochu insisted very strongly that he should do what he asked and said: "As the Emperor has told the ministry nothing about this nomination, it is evident that he foresaw that there might be some objections to it; and I myself object most decidedly to have my nomination discussed by the cabinet. If I could see the Empress, perhaps I could obtain from her Majesty the sanction that would satisfy your scruples." He was so determined and kept at it so long, that finally the minister yielded. "Paris will run a real danger," he said, among other things, "if on the arrival of the Mobiles, I am not here as governor to aid you in restraining these impetuous youths." So, notwithstanding the advanced hour, the minister consented to conduct General Trochu to the Tuileries and ask an audience of the Empress. There was little sleep for any one at the Tuileries during those nights of anguish and anxiety, when each hour brought a new danger or an untoward complication of some

sort. So the Empress was ready to receive her late callers, in the presence of her Mentor, Admiral Jurien de la Gravière. Thereupon, General Trochu explained the reasons for his return, told in detail what had occurred at Chalons, the arguments advanced by Prince Napoleon in the presence of the Emperor, the latter's view and those of Marshal MacMahon. Then he developed his plan of defense around Paris and wound up by giving his reasons why the Emperor should return to the capital.

At this point the Empress interrupted, saying: "I do not and cannot agree with you, General, in the matter of the return of the Emperor. My ministers, as well as Admiral Jurien de la Gravière, whom I consult in all things, are all of my mind on this subject. My reasons for holding this view are based on very different grounds from those on which you and Prince Napoleon at Chalons based yours. I am in daily communication with the Paris police, and I perceive the unmistakable signs of revolutionary restlessness showing themselves on every side. My eyes are open to the dangers to be feared from the worst elements of the inhabitants of this great capital, and I am sadly but surely convinced that 'the vanquished Emperor' would be received here with open hostility. Mark my word, it will be with the greatest difficulty that I shall be able to keep my place here, though I am a wife and mother. But if, on the contrary, the luck of battle should change, and the Emperor, in the midst of his soldiers and on the battle field, should come off victorious over the enemy, then everything might yet be saved. This, I am certain, is the only way to save the situation, for then the Emperor would regain his

lost popularity; for, however sad it is for me to say it, the truth is that his popularity is lost at least for the moment. Why, I am told by those in a good position to know, that under existing circumstances, the Emperor would never reach the Tuileries alive, if he were to attempt to return now. Hence it is that I am most energetically opposed to your plan, General. No, the Emperor shall not come back to Paris," said she and added these words which show how great were her anxiety and anguish to thus forget for a moment the demands of discretion if not of politeness: "Only the Emperor's enemies could advise him to join us here in this dangerous spot."

But General Trochu was not offended by this closing arraignment of him and his friends and of their very questionable conduct and acts. Perhaps it was wily ambition that prevented him from taking exception to these words, or perhaps he comprehended the emotion that must have filled the heart of the Empress at such a moment. However that may be, he did try to exculpate himself at least by saying that such were the views of Prince Napoleon and others who were present at the Chalons council of war.

There were other points in the plans laid before the Empress on this occasion by General Trochu, points which were particularly dear to him from the fact that they were quite his own. He advocated the complete abandoning by everybody of all considerations of internal affairs, so that all France could be united to a man for repelling the common enemy. The adversaries as well as the friends of the dynasty were to be invited to participate in this immense patriotic effort,—fighting against the for-

eign invasion which was imminent. "If all parties fall into line," the general said most truly, "the war becomes a national war."

Says M. Chevreau in the inedited memorandum from which I may be permitted to give further extracts: "This was quite the view held by the Empress, who, in the vivacity and ardor of her nature, exclaimed: 'I approve warmly your ideas on this point, general, and am ready to aid you with all my power in carrying them out. I am quite ready to call to the aid of their country, the most pronounced enemies of the régime, of the Emperor and myself, thus setting an example of conciliation and disinterestedness. I would make my appeal so broad that I am prepared to recall the exiled Orleans princes.' It was generous, perhaps even utopian, to think of opening France once again to these pretenders, to enable them not only to display their cleverness in political intrigue, but to give them a chance to come to the aid of the distracted and wounded fatherland, in a word, to offer the crown, one might almost say, to him who should show himself the most worthy of it. But General Trochu, who, above all things, was selfish, did not understand the patriotic spirit which moved the Empress to make this proposal. He regarded her words as a feminine ruse to find out his real feelings, thinking that the Empress believed him to have a leaning for the Orleans princes. He felt very bitter about this, and said at a later date: 'I saw through the whole thing. The Empress, who had always suspected that I was an Orleanist, I who have never even met the princes of that house, was thus unnecessarily insulting the man, who was sacrificing himself for the tot-

tering Empire, by insinuating that he was the instrument of a political plot and even telling him so right to his face!'

"There was a large element of naïveté in Trochu's make-up that he could express such an absurd opinion as this. Anybody who knew the Empress's character was aware of the excessive impulsiveness and chivalrousness of her nature. These characteristics sufficiently explain why she made the proposal which appeared to so puzzle Trochu. Did it never occur to him that it was a queer moment to try and insult a man who was in a position to do so much for the country and the dynasty? Though the Empress may have considered Trochu full of ambition, she was too much a woman of the world to tell him so point blank. She had learned the lesson taught by Talleyrand that words are given us to conceal our thoughts. One has simply to read Trochu's efforts at self-justification to see how great were his presumption, vanity, and ambition. Not satisfied with his nomination to the high post of governor of Paris, he wished to act the part of a victim and martyr in accepting it. Thus, he has said: 'Instead of meeting in Paris with the welcome which my sacrifices and sincere devotion to the cause shall have obtained, I was an object of insulting suspicion and of continuous conspiracy, my honesty and honor both being continually called in question.' As the Emperor well said at a later period: 'If Trochu really thought he was being insulted, why didn't he resign? As far as I know, he never offered to do so. He even went further and hid his vexation beneath protestations of devotion and indulged in the warmest and most formal terms

in which to express his sentiments of fidelity, attachment and loyalty to our cause. A strange man!'

"General Trochu brought with him to the Tuileries the text of the proclamation which he intended to publish by having it posted up on the walls of Paris. It began with these words: 'Chosen by the Emperor whom I precede by a few hours, etc.' 'That won't do,' said the Empress, interrupting the reading, evidently much to the distaste of the general; 'that statement is not strictly true. The Emperor will not return unless his ministers approve of the measure and I know that they do not approve of it. I am persuaded that the idea of the return has been abandoned.' Thereupon, General Trochu, evidently much disgruntled, went into the adjoining room and corrected the sentence. In fact, he suppressed the Emperor's name at the same time, so that when, next day, the document was read on the walls of the city, it was noticed and not without considerable surprise, that the governor of Paris made no allusion either to the Emperor or the Regent.

"The interview ended only at four in the morning, 'I cannot too strongly call your attention to the state of mind of the inhabitants of the capital,' said the Empress to General Trochu, as the conference was ending. 'I am convinced that you will have to fight against not only the enemy without, but also the enemy within, for public order, society and the government are threatened by the revolutionary party.' General Trochu replied: 'Your Majesty may count upon me to do my duty in case such a contingency arises as that which you fear.' At

that moment, General Trochu appeared like a faithful servitor, declaring his attachment to his Emperor and his country. Admiral Jurien de la Graviére exclaimed: 'I am convinced of his sincerity.' Like MacMahon, at Chalons, he believed that 'General Trochu is an honest man and will loyally carry out his promises.' 'There is nothing to fear,' the Empress said to me; 'General Trochu's nomination should be announced to-morrow. General Palikao should be found forthwith, so that he can countersign the decree.'

"At first, General Palikao was put in a decidedly bad temper at the sight of this decree, and exclaimed: 'The ministers were not consulted in the matter, and the hierarchical customs have been disregarded. Again, the title of "Governor of Paris" does not exist and has not been used for years.' For a moment, I feared the Minister of War might resign, so vexed was he at this measure. But he somewhat calmed down when I told him of what had happened at the Tuileries, and eventually he signed the decree. What is more, he loyally accepted the responsibility of his act and stood by it when it came up before the Legislative Body."

When the Mobiles of the Seine arrived from Chalons, General Trochu informed the Minister of War of the fact. "This was a fresh surprise to me," General Palikao has said in a manuscript memorandum, "for I had not been told of their coming, the reason being that the order had been obtained at Chalons from the Emperor direct, an excellent example of the rather chaotic state of things which reigned at this moment in the government and which did so much to paralyze all our efforts, especially

as the best of order was the rule on the German side. I had counted on these eighteen battalions as a reinforcement for the twelfth army corps and had just sent them a lot of excellent chassepots, which guns it was hard to get now that Metz and Strasbourg were blockaded. Moreover, I feared the consequences of the presence in Paris of these young, hot-headed Parisians. I was convinced in case of any disturbance, they would be found with the disturbers rather than with those who were trying to check the disturbers; and after events showed that I was quite right in this surmise. Thus to modify the destination of these Mobiles without consulting me in the least, was a distinct slight, and I did not hide my displeasure at this sort of treatment. My first impulse was to send the Mobiles back whence they had come. But I found that General Trochu had already got them out of the cars, so that to send them back would be pretty sure to lead to mutiny or riot. So I submitted to the inevitable, and ordered them to the camp at Saint Mandé."

The assumption of power by General Trochu was now an accomplished and very important fact. But it was easy to guess what conflicts would arise between him and the Minister of War. "The loyalty of Palikao is certain," said one of the ministers to the Empress, "but who can tell what Trochu may do?" And this was the very weak point in the situation at this moment on the French side. "I feared it at Chalons and I saw it in Paris," said the Emperor, very laconically, several months afterwards. "Trochu's position was a preponderating one. As governor of Paris his jurisdiction extended

over the national guard, the Imperial guard and all the troops stationed in the Department of the Seine. As he was nominated simultaneously both by me and the Regent, he had a prestige that no friend of the Empire could ignore, and his military position was very strong, backed as he was by eighteen thousand Mobile guards, stationed permanently in the capital at a moment when all the regulars were being sent to the front by the Minister of War. We all realized at that time that the fate of the Empire was in the hands of General Trochu; but what we all did not realize was how feeble those hands would show themselves to be! If he had put his influence and his popularity at the disposal of the Empress, moderate public opinion, the Mobile guards and the better part of the inhabitants would not have gradually gone over to the insurrectionary movement. Of this I have no doubt, and this view is shared by many others beside myself. If Trochu had pursued this course, it would have been a great check to the republican Left, which would have then found itself supported in its efforts to overturn the Empire by only a handful of respectable republican leaders and a mass of rabble, demagogues and shady professional agitators. This situation would have placed the republicans in a very weak position; for without the aid of the vacillating moderates, they could not have hoped to get control of the reins of government, and the revolutionists would have been left alone in their ingloriousness. But by countermanding the Opposition, Trochu thereby gave it much of the strength that it needed, disorganized the government and brought about the final triumph of the insurrectionary party."

At the beginning, General Trochu was feeling his ground and had not yet chosen the path he was to follow. Everything depended on his own ambition and the changing circumstances. It would have been imprudent to break with the Regency at first, for if one of the armies on the eastern frontier should gain a victory and return triumphant to Paris, the legal government would become all-powerful again, and Trochu's game would be ended and he would be looked upon as a traitor. But not to smile on the Opposition, which was gaining strength every day, would also be a grave mistake. He concluded, therefore, that his best plan was to temporize, to increase his popularity and keep an even balance between the Empire and the Opposition, until, to use a familiar phrase, which the Emperor employed in this very connection, he should see which way the cat was going to jump. Whatever should happen, he felt that he had a fine part to play. In the meanwhile, he was careful to increase his personal authority in every way he could, so that when the supreme moment came, all parties would have to recognize his strength and admit that he was master of the situation.

M. Chevreau's notes say: "His very first acts showed the egotism of his nature. He was fond of speaking and writing and he never let an occasion escape for gratifying this abnormally developed *cacoöthes Scribendi et loquendi,* and I am tempted to add a third gerund, *carpendi.* Thus, he addressed a flowery manifesto to the Mobiles of the Seine, in which he introduced himself to those obstreperous youths as 'their protector,' and reminded them that it was he who 'had brought them back to their

homes, where it was their right to be!' 'Their right!' he had already used that phrase at Chalons. Never before had a French general, especially in the midst of a war and with the enemy at the very gates, so forgotten himself as to encourage insubordination. At the next meeting of the ministers, General de Palikao called our attention to this phrase and exclaimed with the greatest energy: 'During war times, soldiers have but one right, and that is to obey their superiors, otherwise what hope of success can there be? I cannot permit sedition to be taught in the French army, and I consequently resign my post.' We were much moved by this scene and tried to reconcile the two generals. The Empress, who presided as Regent, said with much kindness but energy: 'My dear general, I must insist on your not withdrawing from the cabinet, especially in such a crisis, and I trust you will resume the portfolio which you have held with so much credit to yourself and such great benefit to the nation.' The general, much touched by this eloquent speech, which plainly came right from the heart, answered, bowing politely to the flushed lady who sat at the head of the council-board: 'I can withdraw my resignation only in case General Trochu recognizes formally my full authority as Minister of War.' These words were pronounced with marked firmness, and Trochu saw that he must come more than half way, and as the moment had not yet arrived for open resistance, he yielded to the storm, rose and made the statement which his hierarchical chief had the right to expect from him. But the regent and all of us ministers saw that there would be henceforth constant friction between the two generals, and after

events proved that we had not taken too gloomy a view of the situation on this point. Trochu could not resist acting independently and finally drove Palikao completely into the background."

The next thing we know General Trochu was writing a letter to the *Temps,* in which he informed the turbulent Parisian public that he meant to rely only on moral force. "This came as good news to the factious, the revolutionary, the bad and indifferent citizens," said the Emperor later, "who saw that the days of energetic repression were over." Trochu said in this letter, among other things: "The thought of maintaining order, in Paris, by the use of bayonets and swords, when the town is naturally filled with anguish and agitation, strikes me with horror and disgust." "Such language caused honest indignation at the Tuileries," says M. Chevreau, "and we asked General Trochu to explain to us what he meant by 'moral forces.' 'You must admit,' said one of the ministers to him, 'that if it became necessary to use force under ordinary circumstances, warnings and conciliatory speeches would not do. Energy would have to be shown, and may I ask if you have shown it?' Then the governor of Paris, somewhat embarrassed, answered in these words: 'I shall maintain order in the most vigorous fashion, if circumstances require it. Of this you may all be assured.'" "Why, then, did General Trochu publish such a declaration in the newspapers?" the Emperor has well asked. "He simply wasted his time flattering the Opposition and getting himself on friendly terms with people whom he should not have stooped to notice, if he had really grasped his true duty, which was to defend energetically the

existing government. The interests of the country were bound up in those of the government which represented it. But I regret to say that in our dear France, one sometimes meets people who have a strange way of understanding patriotism. The republic, even when it was of a very red and socialistic hue, has seen conservatives push into the background their convictions and their preferences whenever national honor or the flag of France was threatened. On the contrary, our republicans, especially those at the end of the Empire, seemed to rejoice at the misfortunes of the nation, because they saw in these misfortunes the triumph of their favorite form of government. As the series of our disasters grew in numbers and importance, these men showed no sorrow, but were all the more delighted as they saw coming nearer and nearer the moment of the realization of their fond hopes."

The republicans were justified in believing their advent close at hand, for it became more and more evident that they now had at the head of the military forces in the capital a man ready to do their bidding when the moment came to act. As a minister well expressed it, "Trochu stands ready to deliver over the keys of the citadel which he had been appointed to defend!" In the council of ministers Trochu, in order to counteract the effect of his words, letters and actions, pretended to be most conciliatory, repeatedly declared his devotion to the Empire, and always spoke in a most re-assuring tone of his own intentions and of the political situation. The Tuileries still believed in his veracity. The Empress could not admit that Trochu would allow personal ambition to lead him from the path of duty.

Admiral Jurien de la Gravière and several of the ministers had faith in his honesty and attributed his occasionally strange attitude, ambiguous acts and equivocal language, to a somewhat flighty imagination and to over-sanguine illusions. Two of the ministers, however—M. Chevreau and Baron Jerome David—kept close watch of him and considered his behavior very suspicious; and among the leading politicians who were not members of the cabinet, there were several who did not like the situation. The word traitor was employed at this moment on more than one occasion.

But what could be done? Could General Trochu be called upon to resign? The Minister of War would not have been adverse to such a measure, but he was not sure that he had the powers so to act. Also, would it not have caused a riot, or something worse, among the Mobiles, the famous Mobiles of the Seine whom Trochu had converted into a sort of pretorian guard? "We are now all in his hands," said one of the ministers sadly to the Empress, "and we must go to the end in his company, bad though it be." To be charitable, it should be added that if events had turned out otherwise and if Trochu had been sure of playing a first part and had not felt himself forced to curry favor with both parties,—under these circumstances he might have never quitted the right path. Later, he explained his whole course in his own fashion, naturally. "Never for a moment did I cease to consult the best interests of the country," he used to say, "only, I placed the interests of France before those of the dynasty." "But in those solemn days were not France and the dynasty one?" has well asked the Emperor. "Had

not the Empress better understood her rôle when she constantly said to those around her: 'Think only of France?' That is why she did not hesitate to sacrifice herself to the public welfare, and, a few days later, refused to defend her throne against the ever-increasing mob."

The party of opposition to the Empire was beginning daily to feel greater confidence in General Trochu. "I really believe he is our man," remarked a leader on the republican side of the Legislative Body within hearing of one of the ministers, who repeated to the Empress this significant confidence. "The hopes we founded in him have been surpassed," said this same agitator a few days later. Of course, this was far better than they had ever dreamed, "for they had an accomplice at the very council-board of the government itself," as the Emperor very correctly put it. "The Imperial régime was still very strong, and it would not have been so easily broken down on September 4th, if at the very fountain head of authority there had not been General Trochu."

On the morning of August 21st, General Trochu was called upon by the leading members of the Left, with Jules Favre, Picard and Jules Ferry at their head. A friend of mine who managed to be present at this curious interview has left this interesting report of what was said there: "The Governor entered into long and detailed explanations of his course and his opinions on the topics of the hour. 'My rôle and my views have been misunderstood,' he began by saying, acting the part of the unappreciated hero. He charged the Empire with having committed one fault after another and declared it

to be 'solely responsible for our reverses.' He had much to say about patriotism and what he called 'moral force,' though he didn't explain exactly what he meant by the fine-sounding phrase. He displayed all the riches of his well-known eloquence and gradually tore away the veil which until then had somewhat hidden the real aims of his ambitious nature. It was evident by their questions and their words of encouragement that the deputies of the Left fully realized the extent of the wounded vanity which was uppermost in the mind of this man, who thought every good thing that had been accomplished was due to him and who considered himself capable of playing the first part but to whom the Empire had assigned only a secondary one. They went away convinced that Trochu would be with them at the right time, and without openly requesting his support, they flattered him and from that day on watched him as far as this was possible, under the pretext of helping him in his mission. From now on, they were often seen at the Governor's quarters, and were quick to seize upon the imprudent words which too often fell from the lips of the talkative general. Neither party went so far as to put itself in a compromising position, but both parties were very close to an agreement. For the moment, Trochu had not entirely forgotten the fable of the fox and the raven, though flattery was very sweet to his insatiable vanity."

These frequent visits of the deputies of the Left to General Trochu were naturally viewed with considerable anxiety at the Tuileries. They appeared very strange to the Empress and her circle, and they thought it stranger still that the general did

not put a stop to them. At length General Trochu seemed to realize that he must either prevent these visits or explain them. So forestalling all criticism he seized the first opportunity of once again reassuring the Empress of his devotion and his fidelity. "Madam," he said, "if your private police is doing its duty, you must know that I am in communication with members of the Opposition. It is necessary for me to study all shades of public opinion, which sufficiently explains my conduct in this particular. But your Majesty must never doubt my devotion to her and the dynasty. I offer you as a guarantee of my sincerity my triple title of soldier, Catholic and Breton." But, notwithstanding these fine words, the enemies of the Empire grew more and more confident of the real meaning of the General's course and the more the deputies of the Left saw of Trochu, the greater was their arrogance. This was plain to everybody at the Tuileries and all often spoke of the fact. "But what can we do about it?" was heard on every hand in court circles.

Until now, the sittings of the Legislative Body had been relatively calm. The chief effort of the Left was forcing the government to arm the national guard. But they soon saw that nothing important could be accomplished without stirring up a riot of some sort. So in order to get the workmen to leave their shops, alarming news was cunningly circulated. The Left felt that no more time was to be lost. They feared that a victory might be won at the front and the Emperor return at the head of a triumphant army. A new military disaster was needed to bring about the wished for insurrection. The open efforts made to stir up such a movement

exasperated all loyal men and really strengthened the hands of the government. This the Opposition was quick to realize. Gambetta, speaking at this moment in the Legislative Body, severely blamed the authors of an attempt at a riot started in the La Villette quarter of Paris, and demanded that they be punished. But one of the first things that the deputies of the Left did, when, shortly afterwards, they got control of affairs, was to liberate these very criminals! So for a time the Left was forced to fight on parliamentary ground alone. Facing them was a majority, doubtless not very energetic, as was clearly shown during the first week of September, but fully realizing that, in view of the painful crisis through which the nation was then passing, the country could be saved only by preservation of order, and that order could not exist without a regular government, while it was also quite as plain that the government could not exist without the dynasty.

M. Jules Favre and his friends proposed that nine deputies chosen by the Legislative Body be added to the National Committee of Defense which the Government had just created, and in order not to have the proposal rejected by the majority, the author of it did not ask for the election of one of his group. The aim was to get the deputies at least in partial control of the executive part of the government. General Trochu approved this proposal, though it was in fact an encroachment of the legislative branch on the executive branch. As the Emperor well said: "If delegates from parliament were to be admitted to the council where sat the general instructed with the defense of the capital

there was no reason why there should not be sent, as was the case during the Convention, commissioners to the armies, or why deputies should not also sit with the ministers at cabinet meetings. In this way, it would eventually happen that the executive power would yield to the omnipotence of the legislative power. It was plain what the Opposition was striving to accomplish,—once having got the majority in the executive branch, they would find a way of crowding in on the heels of the majority, and the citadel would be taken."

But the government was adamantine in the matter of the principle of the proposal, though quite ready to allow three deputies to come into the Committee of Defense, provided they were chosen by the government. The cabinet finally chose M. Thiers, Daru and Dupuy de Lome whom the Legislative Body had intended to elect. On August 24th, an important discussion took place in the Legislative Body, when the Left made it plain that what they wanted was direct participation in executive authority. M. Ernest Picard, one of the leading republican deputies, openly stated their purpose when, in the lobbies, he said to a moderate deputy, who reported the conversation to the Empress the same evening, that "we distrust the men of the Empire, and if you expect the Left to support the cabinet, you must put some of our members in a position to see what the ministers are doing." At this point M. Jules Favre came up and added: "We hold the Empire solely responsible for all the misfortunes of the moment and we naturally cannot believe that such a fatal régime can save the country. If the nation has confidence in the imperial government, it should say

so; but if it hasn't this confidence, as I believe to be the case, then the Legislative Body should place alongside of the ministers nine deputies who would labor with the cabinet, stimulate it and aid in the work of national defense. The country and its institutions cannot be separated and viewed apart." "M. Favre was right," says the Emperor, "when he declared that the nation and its institutions must be one. But he was wrong when he concluded that its institutions must be destroyed. He was speaking then like a commonplace revolutionist. He made matters worse when he exclaimed on the floor: 'Does an enslaved land fight for its life as would a free land?' M. Favre's course forced the ministry either to come out squarely in support of the rights of the Empire and to abandon its policy of conciliation, or to pass over in silence this challenge of the Left which would discourage its own partisans. If the first line were adopted, the Left would not fail to say to the country that its own interests were being sacrificed to those of the dynasty, and if the second line were followed the Left would say that the government was not sure what its own rights were. Here was a dilemma. The situation was a most delicate one. The cabinet dared not reply directly to M. Jules Favre. But it has always seemed to me that it should have dared to do so. It should have re-affirmed the rights of the government, it should have pointed out the sophism of the Left and brought forth clearly the logical conclusion of the premises, viz., the absolute necessity of maintaining the Empire. This course would have braced up many hesitating minds. But the rather timid cabinet was satisfied with a simple vote of confi-

dence, which it easily obtained from the wavering majority. This debate of August 24th, and especially its conclusion has always seemed to me one of the chief among the many mistakes made by our party at Paris during this terrible crisis. But I fully recognize the fact that there is nothing easier than to criticize a long time after an event."

The Left, greatly encouraged by its first success, continued to pursue its real aim, viz., making the Legislative Body sovereign and subordinating the cabinet, perhaps even destroying it,—all of which happened in the very near future. In a word, the Left was steering towards a power which was neither the Empire nor the Revolution, and the conservatives in the Legislative Body perceiving that this power would be largely in their hands—at least they thought so then, though after events were to prove that such was not to be the case—this satisfied many deputies who were dissatisfied with the actual situation. "This was an excellent position in which to rest on one's arms," says the Emperor. "As long as the Left did not feel itself strong enough to overthrow the Empire, it decided to use the Legislative Body to advance the interests of the Left, and so was bent on giving it new prerogatives. But when it no longer had any use for the Body, then it would dispense with the Body. This policy was as shrewd as it was successful. The deputies of the Left cleverly kept the popular leaders outside of the Legislative Body informed of what they were doing, telling them that little by little the majority would get control and push the Empire aside; but as its power would have no legal basis and no popular support, it would soon be at

the mercy of the Left, and the agitators, who would rid themselves of it as this majority had rid itself of the regency. Furthermore, force, if necessary, would be resorted to in order to bring this about."

In the lobbies, M. Jules Ferry said these words: "You conservatives have only one thing to do now, namely, as you have before you a personal government which has got into a fix from which it cannot extricate itself, you should assume power in the name of the country which elected you, and set up a government of the Legislative Body. You might respect so far as the situation of affairs will permit, the existing constitutional forms and formulas, but you should take into your own hands the real power and the direction of our national defense. You make a grave mistake to blindly confide in the Palikao ministry just as you did in the Ollivier ministry. The suggestion we make is not disinterested. I confess that we of the Left do not wish to participate in this committee of defense and in this parliamentary governmental body which we are urging upon you. We would have nothing to gain by taking part in such a government. But we do not wish that our ideal form of government should begin in the midst of uncertainties. When the country has been got out of its present difficulties by a sort of anonymous government, such as we suggest to you, then and not till then are we ready to set up our own form of government."

The Emperor says: "It is not surprising that the Left Center was seduced by this tempting theory of the Opposition for the Left Center was made up of rather timid men who, though faithful to the Empire, in principle, were glad to have an opportunity

to show their independence. They saw in this proposal an excellent chance offered them to play an important part and to gain popularity without breaking with the government. So they took up the proposition of the Left and modified it. Instead of putting members on the committee of defense, they proposed the nomination of a committee of five who would be in constant communication with the ministers and would also have an eye on the acts of the committee of defense. Though this modification of the original idea was, perhaps, less opposed to the constitution, it was more dangerous to law and order. The duties of the proposed committee were not clearly defined, and it would surely have become inevitably a sort of supervising committee, if not, in fact, a full-fledged government committee. But General de Palikao succeeded in getting the deputies to reject this proposal, as he had been able to do with the original one put forward by the Left. However, the wind had set in that direction, and France and the Empire were to suffer irretrievably."

The Empress was much worried over these acts of the Legislative Body, especially when, on August 31st, it was proposed to elect a committee which was to coöperate with the ministry for the defense of Alsace and to elect another one—an "extraordinary committee," it was to be called—which was to go to Alsace. At this moment but two departments were invaded. But if this plan were adopted, Eugénie saw that numerous committees might be scattered all over France, and thus the Legislative Body would be administering half of the country, perhaps. But it was not alone the Legislative Body which was thus encroaching on the rights of the

Regency. It was being attacked in other quarters and in various fashions. Thus, the radical newspapers, public meetings and the International were all doing their best to belittle the régime in every possible way.

"The public allowed itself to be fooled," says the Emperor, "by all these clamors against what were called 'anti-chamber generals.' No effort was made to find out whether the insults were well founded. They forgot that these same generals covered themselves with glory in Africa, in the Crimea and in Italy. Nor did they seem to see how abominably unjust it was to suddenly overlook all this splendid past because these same generals had had the misfortune to meet defeat on the Rhine. They did not inquire whether the army was in good condition in July; whether the plan of reorganization, which Marshal Niel and I had undertaken to have carried out, had begun to produce its fruits; nor would they recall the ill-will shown by the Left in the Legislative Body when we asked for appropriations, etc., for the army before the outbreak of the war. The public had to have some explanation for our misfortunes, and the easiest way to explain the catastrophe was to say not that we had been conquered, but that we had been betrayed! And the remedies for the crisis which were proposed by the republicans were nearly as bad as their criticisms. Because the generals had shown themselves unequal to their task, they were to be replaced by other generals. As the Empire might prove an obstacle, it, too, must be replaced and the governing power centered in the hands of the deputies, that is to say, in the hands of the deputies of the Left! We were

told that the war would then become a republican war and the spirit of patriotism, as in '92, would bring victory to the French standards. We were further given to understand that if the suburbs of Paris were not appeased by the sacrifice of the Empire, there would be an uprising worse than that of June 1848! The advance press published inflammatory articles on these lines and the writers of these articles addressed excited public meetings in the suburbs. Briefless barristers, doctors without patients, scribblers who could not find a market for their manuscripts, so-called students, low characters of all sorts—such were the class of Parisians who stood ready to back the leaders of the 'revolution' of September 4th, such was the rank and file of the army commanded by the deputies of the Left. The soldiers were far more advanced than the line officers, and the latter more advanced than their generals, the deputies. The journalists and the rank and file were eager to crush the Empire, by means of an insurrection. But the deputies, while they wished also to crush the Empire, were not pleased at the idea of accomplishing this by means of an insurrection. They thought they could accomplish the same end by a parliamentary usurpation. Though most of them would not actively encourage the insurrection, they would not throw obstacles in its way. The deputies wanted something more than to be simply greeted by wild popular enthusiasm. They desired to set up a real and apparently legal government. The insurrectionary system frightened them, for they feared they might be outdone by their followers, who would suddenly become their leaders. Jules Simon said to a friend

of the Empress: 'If the Legislative Body is overthrown, I and my friends fear that the communists or Blanqui party may get control.' In a word, Jules Simon and his group wished to have these communists and Blanqui behind them, not before them. They found, too, that this threat of an insurrection had a good effect on the majority of the Legislative Body, causing them to look more favorably on the plan for pushing the Empire into the background."

An unpublished report of Eugénie's, as Regent, drawn up for the Emperor contains this passage bearing on this same phase of the political situation at this time: "I see that Jules Favre and his party are engaged in toadying to the demagogues. The former keep up their relations with the latter, the first doing their best to sterilize the actions of the second, and coquetting with the insurrection while really trying to forestall it. Some members of the Left—Jules Ferry, Emmanuel Arago, Ernest Picard, and others—are holding aloof from this movement. Comte de Kératry is very violent. Charles Ferry, Arthur Picard, Etienne Arago and several other prominent republicans are doing what they can to stir up a revolution. But, with the exception of Kératry all these leaders of the Left are opposed to really violent measures. Of course the International and the secret societies are very busy enrolling members. Emissaries have been visiting the workshops to preach revolt to the workmen. Agitators are busy on all sides. One of the ministers said very truly at a recent sitting of the cabinet: 'The utopists of '48 seem to have given place to-day to Bohemian agitators.' The secret police signal to us as specially active Delescluze, Blanqui, Ra-

zoua, Millière, Félix Pyat, Régére and Cavalier. You will recognize some of these names as having been to the fore before the present crisis began. The restless popular ranks are filled with the poor and the unsuccessful. Jules Vallès, who styles himself the candidate of the 'misery party,' has well described them in these words which the minister already mentioned wrote down for me yesterday, in order that I might send them to you. Here they are: 'Misery without a flag leads to what has one, and forms an army of floating fragments, an army which includes in its ranks more sons of the upper than of the lower classes. Can you not see them falling upon us, they so pale, mute and emaciated, beating with the bones of their martyrdom on the drum of revolt, and waving as their flag, the blood-stained shirt of their last suicide, fastened to the end of a sword? God alone knows whither their folly may carry them.' Another minister gives me this note: 'The usual opposition of the Legislative Body, the republican press, the restless members of Bohemia are all, as the Emperor well knows, up in arms against the Empire. This has always been more or less the case, only now it is more than less. But what the Emperor may not know through his absence from Paris, is that the wily Left is trying to get control of things without telling us just what form of government they mean to give us; the journalists of the radical press declare openly for the republic, so that we know very well what they want, while the "unclassed," by which I mean those who have fallen from a higher stratum of society, are seeking to destroy what exists so that, in the midst of the confusion which will follow, they may

have a chance of getting back what they used to have. These three categories do not all agree in matters of detail, but they are as one as regards the destruction of the Empire; and this sad truth it is well that our dear Emperor should know and keep clearly in mind during the present crisis.'

"However, we are not giving all our attention to these lamentable internal matters, but are thinking of the foreign enemies and trying to deal as best we can with the military situation. The thirteenth corps has just been formed, and one of the divisions, under the command of General d'Exea, has been sent to Reims. The other two are awaiting orders. The minister of war would send them to Chalons, but at the last ministerial council it was pointed out that if these 22,000 men, commanded by General Vinoy and forming the Parisian guard, left Paris, the government would be practically without defense. It was held that a few good troops were necessary here in case of a popular uprising. This may be wise, on the whole, seeing that we would be left not only without trusty troops, but in the power of the Mobiles, but I felt called upon to say to the ministers these words, which were very well received: 'Once more I beg of you, gentlemen, not to think of me, nor of the dynasty, but only of France. I am even opposed to the discussion of such a question. What terrible remorse would be ours, and how our conscience would prick us, how ashamed we would be to stand before posterity, if it should be known one day that the presence of these 22,000 men at the front could have changed defeat into victory, and yet we immoblized them here for our own defense! Do not let us lose an

instant more discussing this painful subject. Let General Vinoy start this very day.' On the 28th the corps left for Mézières!''

The next extract is taken from a memorandum furnished the Empress by M. Rouher. I believe that it has never been printed before. It runs as follows: ''It was expected in some quarters that General Trochu would complain of the departure of the troops to Mézières. But the fact was that their going made him more than ever master of the situation. But by our sending these troops beyond the city walls, we showed a large spirit of personal disinterestedness and had a right to put certain questions to General Trochu, which we proceeded to do at the next council of ministers. At first, the governor replied somewhat vaguely to our questions, evading them, as usual. Thereupon I interrupted with these words: 'Excuse me, general, but we must come to some practical conclusion. What measures do you intend to take to protect the Legislative Body?' Driven into a corner, he felt forced to reply, and this is what he said. I noted his words while he was speaking, and I am sure that I have his exact expressions: 'In the first place,' he began, 'I may be allowed to express some surprise that such a question is put to a French general. When I accepted the post of governor of Paris, I knew I should have to face the possibility of the dynasty or the Legislative Body being menaced. If this should occur, I reply that, with my old Breton faith, I am ready to meet death on the steps of the Tuileries if the dynasty is in danger!' ''

Enclosing this memorandum to the Emperor, the Empress added those words: ''What could be said

in reply to such a statement falling from the lips of the military governor of Paris? Nothing, though many of us felt that the facts gave the lie, I am sorry to say, to the words of General Trochu. But we had to believe, or at least seem to believe, that what he said was the truth! However, we all knew that he had as little as possible to do with the Minister of War, while he was constantly hobnobbing with the leaders of the republic and Left. I am told on the best authority that, in the presence of the deputies of the Left, he has criticized very severely the committee of defense whom he had praised at the council of ministers only a few hours before. He had agreed with M. Chevreau that the officers of the national guard who had been appointed by the government would be asked not to resign, as they wished to do, now that the new battalions are electing their own officers. We counted on his not accepting their resignations, in case any were handed in. But no sooner had he got back to the Louvre, where he received these officers, than he congratulated them upon the readiness with which they had acquiesced in the elective system, and accepted their resignations! What is to be thought of such a man? Of course this action of the general has done more than any one other thing to disorganize the national guard and render it unreliable as far as the Empire is concerned. The question may now well be asked, Who will defend the Regency? I think we may count on the police, the municipal guards and the little body of regular troops stationed in the military depots about the city. But it would be difficult to bring these scattered and desperate bodies together. Opposed to

them, the revolutionary movement would have the Mobiles and the new national guard."

This memorandum, which is also by a minister, but I am not perfectly sure which one, is dated a few days later than those already given. It runs as follows: "Things have reached such a pass, that I believe all that is necessary now to put an end to our regency is for the Left to strike a vigorous blow. Public opinion seems timid and cavillating—at one moment showing sudden enthusiasm for the deputies of the Left who are declared to be patriots, then turning towards Marshal Bazaine, whom they believe invincible, and next swinging around to General Trochu whom they think capable of saving both Paris and France!"

Many months later, the Emperor spoke as follows in a conversation concerning the events of this period: "The Regency trusted in Trochu and also thought the Empire stronger than it was, and I shared this opinion. The Left might have played a grand patriotic rôle, but preferred to consult its own petty interests, by itself, it could not overthrow the Empire; but it found an unexpected support, in the first place, in the perhaps excessive disinterestedness of that government, and, in the second place, in the disorder which General Trochu spread about him. Trochu has been compared to Fouché, who, in 1815, conspired against the great Emperor with the Bourbons. But in the case of the Duke of Otranto, he might have found some excuse for his conduct in the fact that he was aiding in bringing back the legitimate rulers of the old régime, in the interests of order and an honorable peace. It has been said in palliation of Trochu's conduct that he accepted

the governorship on the condition that I return to Paris, with the Chalons army. It is quite true that there was much debate at Chalons in August, 1870, whether the army and myself should return to the capital, but this had nothing to do with the appointment and the acceptance, on the part of General Trochu, of the above-mentioned post. Marshal MacMahon has already made a statement to this effect, and I confirm the truth of what he has said. The fact is that General Trochu was not faithful to his oath because he was led little by little to fall away from his old friends and beliefs. He gladly accepted this high post as it allowed him to play a large part and preserved him from having to take an active command at the front, with all its uncertainties and dangers. Once in his post, everything he did showed that his first aim was how to keep there. He flattered the Mobiles so that they would support him. He tried to flatter the regency in order to retain his post. He flattered the Left so as not to lose his popularity. Up to the very last moment, he let circumstances decide whether he would be the savior of the dynasty or the man of the revolution. When he finally accepted the last rôle, he saw he was on the winning side. Such was this man, who will always have as many detractors as admirers, but whom all imperialists will always consider to have deserted their cause at a critical moment."

In another conversation held in a circle of friends at Chislehurst, a few months before his death, the Emperor was led to speak of the difficulties in governing a country like France, on account of certain characteristics of the French people and of certain

general features of political life in France,—considerations which affect alike all forms of government in France, whether of a demagogic, republican, monarchical or imperial character. This fact should be kept in mind in passing judgment on the causes which produced the sudden collapse of the imperial edifice in 1870. These remarks are quite in their place at this point in these memoirs, at the end of a chapter which gives the history of events that so well illustrate the observations of the Emperor.

"It should always be remembered," said Napoleon III, "that the French are a Latin race and so are quick to despondency, as well as to elation. This temperament has to be reckoned with by every government, and more than one cabinet under all régimes has fallen a victim to this race characteristic. Many times during the Second Empire, we had to do the wrong or the weak thing, in order to turn this difficulty. The very statement I am making now I have repeatedly made in the presence of the ministers at the Tuileries, with their approval and thorough understanding. This impressionability of the public is a tremendous source of weakness to any and every government in France.

"Another cause of governmental feebleness in France at the moment of a crisis is the preponderating influence exercised over the country by Paris, and the excessive weakness of all the rest of France in everything that concerns political and administrative power. One of the grave mistakes made by the first revolution was the blotting out of the old provinces. I know that it was perhaps one of the

necessities of the moment, when all Europe was marching against France, to unify the nation and make Paris the powerful head. But the fact remains that in a home crisis, this excessively centralized system puts the government entirely at the mercy of the capital. It is true that so long as a régime is acceptable to the vast majority of the nation, it can go on very well and perhaps even better, under this system, but when a dark hour comes and the government wishes to lean on the people, you find you are leaning on a reed. If, in 1870, Paris had not been France, as it is in all political matters, the Regency could not have been overturned by a handful of republican deputies and an ambitious general, backed by a city rabble. If Toulouse had been 'the capital of the South,' as she once was, if Rouen had been the capital of Normandy, with a parliament sitting within her gates, as formerly, if Lyons, Marseilles, Bordeaux, etc., had been great and powerful centers, the Empire would still be standing, and Germany would not have dared to penetrate into the very heart of our country. What the pilgrims said in the eighteenth century, and what Byron has so well paraphrased in 'Childe Harold,' applies almost to Paris and France:

> "'While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand;
> When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall;
> And when Rome falls,—the world!'

"And like every other government, we suffered from that other peculiarly French characteristic,—the fact that France has had so many different régimes, one closely following the other, during the past century, that she is not strongly wedded to any

one of the various forms of government which she has tried for a brief period. Dynastic traditions are weak, family connections are broken, and when the hour of trial comes, the people do not rally patriotically around the throne, and the unfortunate monarch suddenly finds himself deserted even by his servants! The great Napoleon had this experience; so did both of the kings of the restoration, the one after the other; so did Louis Philippe; and the Empress and I are the most recent, but probably not the last, of these unlucky rulers,—victims of an historical disease which kills every sovereign whom it attacks."

CHAPTER XII

THE REVOLUTION OF SEPTEMBER 4, 1870

Of course, very much has been written concerning the fall of the Second Empire and the setting up at Paris in the early days of September, 1870, of a revolutionary republican government. The republican leaders have been especially loquacious on this subject and their many volumes of souvenirs of this period of French history contain long chapters devoted to what occurred in this eventful first week of that memorable autumn. The bibliography of the other side is of much more modest proportions, and the Bonapartist party has been particularly reticent on this subject. Therefore it cannot fail to be of interest to posterity to possess an account of these stormy days written from the imperial standpoint by the aid of documents and souvenirs which were in the Empress' possession or in the possession of members of her immediate circle which is the justifiable excuse for this rather long and somewhat detailed chapter.

On the morning of September 3, 1870, private telegrams from Brussels brought to the ministers and the court news of the disaster of Sedan. The Havas Agency also mentioned the capitulation of the army, the death of the Duke of Magenta, which was not true, and the captivity of the Emperor, which, unfortunately, was true. The report was so

startling and unexpected that the first impression produced thereby was one of incredulity, and it was declared to be a gross exaggeration. As, however, no tidings were forthcoming from the army at Chalons and as, on the other hand, General Vinoy announced the arrival of numerous fugitives at Mézières, it was impossible not to realize that there had been a defeat. The cabinet and the Empress felt that it was not possible to keep the chambers in ignorance of the news; so it was decided to announce a serious disaster, but not give any of the sad details till they were confirmed or denied. The Senate received the ministerial communication with a spirit of stern patriotism and showed no signs of wavering. But the effect of the news was quite different in the Legislative Body. The majority, though composed of men of sense who were eager to defend the interests of the country, revealed themselves as incapable of seconding the government at this great crisis. It may be said in extenuation of their strange conduct that they had not had experience in grand parliamentary struggles and were not strong enough to fight the bold and more practiced Opposition.

"The Opposition had been patiently waiting for a long time for this chance to strike," the Emperor said at a later period. "What indeed did they care for the country's misfortunes, the defeat and capitulation, if they could find therein the means to overthrow the dynasty and get control of France? The French who are hard, almost impossible to govern, cannot support defeat. These bold leaders utilized this national trait and threw on the government all the blame for what had happened."

It was not possible, however, to lay the blame of this fiasco on the Emperor, for he no longer commanded the armies. Jules Favre accused him of having been an impediment to MacMahon, and of having drawn off from the troops destined for the defense of the country a body for his own protection. This perfidious accusation, however, had no foundation in fact. But as the friends of Jules Favre feared that the Emperor, like Napoleon I after Waterloo, might have escaped with a small detachment for the purpose of reëntering Paris and seizing the reins of government, they thought it wise to circulate this baseless rumor. In this way, they armed themselves against the possibility of his return, by making the easily gullible population of Paris believe that the army had been sacrificed to the Emperor. Jules Favre went a step farther. At this moment, he put this question in the Legislative Body, to the Prime Minister: "Is the Emperor in communication with his ministers?" General Palikao who had received no news from him, was forced to answer: No. Thereupon Jules Favre declared that the imperial government had ceased to exist, that the country had become its own ruler and that the supreme direction of the state should be intrusted to a certain military personage, "whose name is known, who is dear to the country, who takes precedence over all others, and in whose presence the specters of every other government must fade away. I say it boldly in the face of the whole people: this is the only remedy, and I trust that the nation hears me!" Stripped of its high-flown verbosity, this was a simple invitation to the mob to follow the insurrectionary movement then

forming and to offer the dictatorship to General Trochu.

Here is a proof that a secret understanding already existed between Trochu and the Opposition deputies, which became all the more evident from what happened on the following day. General Palikao protested against Favre's insinuation, though it may have been only for the form and he perhaps already had doubts concerning Trochu's fidelity to the Empire. He even declared that it was an insult to Trochu to suppose him capable of accepting power from the hands of the mob. The Legislative Body was in a very agitated state, the extremists of the Left becoming more and more arrogant as the discussion went on, interrupting by scoffs and denials the speech of the Prime Minister when he tried to prove that a constituted government could alone conduct, in a capable manner, the defense of the nation. M. Schneider tried to make the assembly realize the gravity of the situation. But the members of the Left were exultant. They already saw the régime overthrown and themselves installed in power. Two hours were passed in violent and useless debate. Toward 4 o'clock came the telegram which the Emperor had been authorized by the German authorities to send after the capitulation. It read: "The army is defeated and captured; I am a prisoner. Napoleon." Sad news was expected of course. But who could have foreseen such a terrible catastrophe as this?

One of those who stood very near to the Empress, writes, very truly, as follows concerning the reception of this telegram: "The Empress endured all that a sovereign and a woman can endure. She

forced back her tears and assumed a calm manner in order to carry out more effectively the most pressing measures. In spite of her great discouragement, the Empress did not at first imagine that the Parisian populace would feel no pity for those overpowered by such an immense sorrow. She kept saying: 'A captive army and an imprisoned Emperor.'" At a later time, the Emperor himself thus spoke concerning this moment: "In other countries the nation would have gathered spontaneously round the regent and serried ranks of defenders would have been ready to stand by her if her authority were menaced. After each misfortune which befell the house of Austria, the people of that country hastened to prove their sympathy, compassion and devotion to their sovereign. The same would have been the case in Italy or England. Had not Prussia known days quite as painful? which had however only tended to tighten the bonds which united the Hohenzollerns to their subjects. Alas! in France one has no right to be unfortunate in war. The uninterrupted series of revolutions which have followed one another for the last century are plain proof that governments are more unstable in our country than they are anywhere else."

At first the Empress did not believe in any immediate danger of a revolution. Her confidence was based principally on the faithfulness of those who occupied high places in the army. Though she feared that perhaps General Trochu might be capable of yielding to the promptings of his ambition, notwithstanding the call of duty and his sworn allegiance, Eugénie well knew that all the generals of France were, happily, not like him. Another cause

for her tranquillity lay in the fact that an army of 22,000 men was stationed at Paris, under the command of General Vinoy. When, just before the battle of Sedan, there was some talk of sending these troops to the assistance of Marshal MacMahon, the sovereign was reminded that if these soldiers were withdrawn, the capital might be at the mercy of the popular movement. The Empress then said, and I am happy to be able to repeat these words here: "Let there be no thought of me, or of the dynasty, but only of France and the army. I will not even discuss the question. I do not care to have the French people blame me some day for having held back in Paris 22,000 men for my personal safety, thus compromising, it might be, a glorious victory." The Empress not only could not entertain the possibility, and especially the probability, of an uprising of the Paris population; but if it should come, she was quite opposed to an armed fight against the Parisians. Eugénie said, on this occasion to one of the commanding officers: "If I can prevent it, I shall not permit the horrors of a civil war to be added to those of a foreign war; I decline even to entertain the likelihood of Frenchmen killing Frenchmen, of Paris flowing with blood of her own citizens at a time when the whole country is in mourning. I repeat what I have already said several times. Do not waste a thought on me; think only of how to bring about peace."

Perhaps it may be permitted to include these true words of a kind friend: "The chivalrous soul of Eugénie was full of trust. Up to the very last moment, up to the hour when the Legislative Body was invaded, she believed in the generosity of

the Parisian people, in their patriotism, in the lofty sentiments of the whole population, in the respect which would be felt for the woman, the mother, the sovereign. She was not yet obsessed, as she doubtless must have been a few hours later, by the vision of Marie Antoinette, a vision of blood, anguish, horror! Finally, however, her illusions faded away and her chivalrous utopia was dissipated. But she never regretted the confidence she had put in the Parisians. In this crisis she neglected none of her duties, she thought only of the good of her people, —of the people which so easily forsook her whom it had formerly overwhelmed with adulations and applause."

For a brief moment there was some talk of attempting a coup d'état; but the thought was soon brushed aside. This was fortunate for the adversaries of the imperial house, who, themselves, were in no wise checked in what they did by any patriotic motives. What happened to France was secondary, provided they could succeed in establishing their dear republic. Meanwhile, measures were taken to protect the Legislative Body, General Palikao himself giving the necessary orders to this effect. This fact has not always been noted in the accounts of this crisis. As General Trochu was busy visiting the fortifications and could only return in the course of the evening, the Prime Minister was forced to address himself to the subordinate of the Military Governor of Paris; and he did so in these words, which, it may be said in passing, are not the words that have always been placed in the mouth of General Palikao. "I am certain," he wrote confidently to General Soumain, "that a manifestation of some

kind is being prepared, and as this affair has nothing to do with the defense of Paris, which is your special care, will you let me know what measures you have taken to prevent disturbances of any kind? You will, furthermore, receive your orders direct from me if the public peace is disturbed." It will thus be seen that Palikao distrusted Trochu, and did not hesitate, for the public welfare, to bring down on his own head the anger of the then popular rival. In spite of the urgency which excused this act—and it should be borne in mind that Palikao held the portfolio of war—Trochu never forgave "this slight"; and he was especially angry when he read the very letter in which the order was given, which General Soumain, in order to protect himself, had sent to him, his superior officer.

The Empress warmly approved of the decision to defend the Legislative Body against the possible rising of the mob, and when it was proposed to take similar measures for the safety of the Tuileries, which it was feared might be attacked during the night, she required that orders be given to the troops not to fire on the people; "for at no price will I consent to the shedding of one drop of French blood for the preservation of my life." A faithful friend has asked: "Ought one not to admire such abnegation, such absolute forgetfulness of her own security?" but the Empress never liked to have this order referred to in this way. She always held that anybody of the least spirit, in her position, would have acted just as she did.

Almost every hour, important questions were being brought forward among the ministers. One of these concerned the executive authority for the

moment. It was asked whether, the Emperor being a prisoner, it had not become necessary to modify this branch of the government. It is not customary in France for this power to reside wholly in the hands of a woman and public opinion generally did not accept this state of things. Among the friends of the Imperial dynasty were some who wondered somewhat that the governmental direction should be confided to the Empress alone, while others held and with much logic, that her powers, since she was regent, were too limited, and she had not the right to nominate the ministers. Another party argued that since the executive power was weakened by the absence of the Emperor, it should be fortified by the adjunction of some deputies from the Legislative Body, the constitutional régime which was then on trial seeming to require a course of this kind. The Empress left the ministers quite free to reorganize the regency on the lines they thought best, constantly assuring them that "they were to think of France first and the dynasty last." Much precious time was consumed in discussing this measure, without any conclusion being arrived at. The cabinet seemed to think there was no haste in making preparations against the menacing dangers. The revolutionists, however, did not lose a second in idle talk; but feeling that their hour had come, hastily completed their organization. They should have been forestalled; but instead of that, they were suffered to get the start in all directions, with fatal consequences naturally, to the Empire.

As the Empress had refused to even consider the idea of having to resort to the coup d'état, and as preparations for a siege of Paris, with the neces-

sary defenses which this would entail, had to be met promptly, the government should at least have done everything in its power to retain its influence, its authority, its strength. Eugénie felt this but did not succeed in inspiring all the ministers with her own feelings on the subject. The cabinet was too prone to let increase the impression that all hopes were centered in General Trochu, who, notwithstanding his quarrel with Palikao, was still thought trustworthy by the Imperialist leaders. Owing to this popularity and his high official position, it was certain that Trochu might exercise a great influence on coming events. What was also certain is that if he had shown a determination to defend the government, he would have brought the national guard over to his side, and thus done much to check the plans and combinations of the revolutionists and the mob. The Empress early realized how much depended on the energy and friendliness of General Trochu, and so she determined to make a special effort to secure his help in her difficulties and perplexities. So Eugénie requested M. Chevreau, minister of the interior, to call on the military governor of Paris, tell him what was then known to her concerning the situation both inside and outside of the city, and invite him to come and consult her as to the best thing to do under the circumstances. M. Chevreau has left a memorandum concerning this call and has added his comments thereon. This memorandum and these comments run as follows:

"Had Trochu been really the right man in the right place, as many thought at the time, and as some still think, curiously enough, had he been honestly desirous of staving off the revolution and sav-

ing the government and thereby the régime, would he not have gone at once to the Empress in order to discuss with her the means of defense, as this defense depended entirely upon him? But Trochu had long been a malcontent; he was always ambitious and selfish, thinking solely of the part he might play in this painful situation. He cared little about saving the dynasty and thereby putting an end to the misfortunes of the moment, which were overwhelming France. His friends, and he himself, said later that, in forsaking the Imperial dynasty, he had thought only of saving the country, whose salvation he no doubt imagined was bound up in the revolution! This defense has not a leg to stand upon. Trochu had a duty to fulfill. He should not have broken his oath, and he should have made every effort to defend the government which he had sworn to defend. I was considerably moved when I spoke with him. I told him of the Empress's anxiety, that his place was at her side, that all faithful friends and followers should group themselves around her, that in short, she was expecting him. Trochu replied that he had just got off his horse, that he was tired, that he had not dined, but that in the evening he would come to the Empress. Thereupon I withdrew, not a little surprised at such rather lame excuses in such a crisis. But I did believe that the governor of Paris would not fail to do his duty and would come to the palace, as he said he would. After my departure, he sat down to dinner, and while eating sent off various orders concerning the fortifying of the city, which was then going on. Before retiring for the night, I went to the Tuileries and saw the Empress, who said to me:

'He has not come.' We were waiting for him while he was lying quietly in bed! It was only the next morning that he put in an appearance, when it was too late to take any effectual measures to defend the throne."

One of the friends in Eugénie's immediate circle makes these comments on this same incident: "Did Trochu hesitate about going to the Tuileries because he was uncertain whether it was the best thing for him to do in his own interests? Or did he allow his irritation over the Soumain incident to outweigh the claims of duty? Neither he nor those who have attempted to defend him look at his conduct in the same light as those who do not hesitate to pronounce his action as nothing less than a desertion and a cowardly proceeding. The Empress, who was indulgent to those who failed in their fidelity to her at this time, always allowed it to be guessed that she considered Trochu a traitor, who had early decided not to offer his services to the regent, but to hold himself aloof so as to be in a compromised position for what the future might have in store for him. Posterity will be severe for Trochu when he is judged in this connection. Aside from the strict duty of offering his services to the sovereign whom he had sworn to protect, what a fine part that 'Breton, catholic and soldier' might have played as protector to an unfortunate woman who was in the greatest perplexity and whose very life might be in danger. There was not only the dynasty but the woman; and General Trochu might have protected both. He came to the rescue of neither."

There was another important political personage in Paris at this moment who might have given use-

ful aid to the government against the revolution. I refer to Adolphe Thiers. He enjoyed considerable popularity and was highly appreciated, in the Legislative Body, especially by the members of the Center whose moderate ideas he shared, and even by the Left who looked upon him as a supporter, who was indispensable to them and who could not be overlooked. Outside of the Chamber, M. Thiers exercised a strong influence on the Parisian middle class. His attitude on public affairs chimed in with their conservative tastes and their love of opposition. He was known to have been opposed to the war, a legendary reputation had already sprung up around his name and he was growing more and more popular—dangerously popular —every day. M. Thiers might have played an important part in those sad days, if he had not been so much under the influence of his hatred of the dynasty and had not been influenced too, probably, by the desire to show how necessary he was to all factions. If, in his clear, precise way, he had appeared in the tribune in these dying hours of the Legislative Body and had declared that the war could be carried on to the end and peace negotiated by nobody so well as by the existing government, that the ministry must not be trammeled in its patriotic labors, that the regency, which had been recognized by France and Europe, must be loyally sustained, that in a word, no change should be made at such an hour,—if Thiers had laid aside his old rancors and spoken in such terms, there is every reason to believe that he would have carried the Chamber with him, and the irreconcilables would have been left in the lurch; he would have gathered

around the government not only the Bonapartists, but the moderate conservatives and the republicans, and the revolution would have been nipped in the bud, while Trochu would not have dared to play into the hands of the demagogues and would have kept his word. This view of the possible rôle of M. Thiers was held by the Emperor himself when he spoke on the subject in later years. "To form a solid group around a government in danger," he once said, "when the government does not bear the anonymous label of Republic, is impossible in France, unless some commanding voice is raised in favor of such a course." But this part was too grand for a man like M. Thiers, who possessed medium political powers and was so fond of parliamentary scheming.

Perceiving how valuable his support would be, the Empress determined to see if he could be brought over to her side. During this crisis, it was her rule to strive to surround herself for the common defense with men of ability whatever their political opinions might be. She was even ready to take the first step in this direction whenever it was necessary. So the Empress now turned her attention to M. Thiers. Prosper Mérimée seemed the best man to act as an intermediary between the Empress and the all important deputy. The latter consented to receive him. In a confidential report, M. Mérimée thus summed up his mission:

"I said to him: 'The Empress asks your advice. She knows you are a good citizen, and she feels that the advice you would give her would be to the best interests of the country.'

"Thiers: 'I am willing to forget old grievances,

but I distrust the Empire. And what is the use of coming to me now when the dynasty is on the brink of the precipice? Of what practical value could my counsels now be? I would appear to be changing my opinions, and without doing the country any good thereby. I feel very much flattered by this confidence which the Empress shows in me, but I prefer to keep in the background.'

"I went to him twice. The second time was after the fall of Sedan, when I said to him: 'The Emperor now having disappeared from the scene, you could hold the predominant place in the Imperial government.'

"Thiers: 'But after this disaster, I am powerless to do any good.' "

This was an attractive offer to a man so ambitious as M. Thiers. But the political situation was full of dangers and the selfish and aged politician was rather afraid to assume such heavy responsibilities. But still the Empress did not yet despair of moving him. M. Mérimée having failed in his mission, Prince Metternich, the Austrian ambassador to France, tried, though without success. Such a step by such a personage was very significant. It was monarchical Europe emphasizing its preference for the regency and its fear of the revolution. Thiers replied to Prince Metternich: "I have no advice to give, and I am waiting to see what turn events take." Metternich once said in this connection: "Had Thiers and Trochu come forward at this moment to the support of the regency, they would probably have saved the Empire and attenuated the national disaster. But they both refused their aid,

and the Empress was left alone with her ministers to struggle against the revolution."

Unmistakable signs of agitation now became visible throughout Paris. As the news of the Sedan disaster spread it was easy to perceive the first simmering of a great popular uprising. Crowds gathered on the Boulevards and around the palace where sat the Legislative Body, while groups of discontented citizens formed here and there in every street and emissaries of secret societies patrolled the more densely populated parts of the town. An important meeting of journalists and leaders of the more advanced parties was held in the Rue de la Sourdière. On every lip hung the word coup d'état, and the mere idea of such a thing happening sufficed to exasperate the people, while the revolutionists clamored for prompt action. Jules Favre and his colleagues of the Left did not seem to wish for an insurrection, the outcome of which appeared decidedly problematical as there was danger that it might be crushed before it reached its maturity. They favored the idea of an imposing popular demonstration, which they hoped would force the hand of the Legislative Body to put an end to the Empire and give them the governing power, which, of course, was their real aim. Etienne Arago, Alfred Naquet, Kératry and all the leaders in the movement felt that if a crowd could be brought together and massed in the space fronting the Palais Bourbon, where the Legislative Body sat, a revolution was inevitable. The *Siècle* struck the keynote, when it printed this notice in its issue of September 3rd, "Thousands of national guards will assemble tomorrow at 2 p. m. unarmed, in the square facing

the palace of the Legislative Body." The activity of the revolutionists during the night showed its effect the next morning; all the workshops were deserted and the rising was already under way in the suburbs.

Anxious at the turn events were taking in Paris, many deputies of the majority urged M. Schneider, President of the Legislative Body, to call an extraordinary sitting. A prominent deputy said to him: "The insurrection is getting ahead of us. We must make haste if we are to prevent a disaster. The peaceful part of the population must feel that the government is protecting them, and the disorderly part must be made to know that this same government is determined to deal with them promptly and sternly." With the majority Jules Favre and his friends also desired an immediate sitting, for they feared an insurrection and a coup d'état. Everybody, in fact, asked for the sitting to begin again. So M. Schneider called the deputies together for midnight, September 3rd. The sitting really got under way at one o'clock in the morning of the 4th. The Prime Minister, General Palikao, displeased that the sitting had been called without the approval of the cabinet, asked that it be adjourned till noon. This was agreed to, but not until Jules Favre had had time to introduce a resolution proposing the overthrow of the Empire. The resolution also called for the appointment of a committee with full powers to direct the executive branch of the government, while General Trochu was to be kept in his post as governor of Paris. Here again was evidence of the close relations of Trochu with the Opposition.

Again, as a last resort, the supporters of the rapidly fading Imperial power turned towards Thiers. Count d'Ayguesvives, one of the Empress' friends, and who was on good terms with M. Thiers, appealed to him in these words: "Do tell me what you think that unfortunate woman, so sorely stricken in her affections both as wife and mother, ought to do in this crisis."

Thiers: "I might be willing to advise a member of the Orleans family under similar circumstances, but I cannot advise the Empress."

M. d'Ayguesvives: "But surely you can send her some message."

Thiers: "Tell her that we are not—my friends and I—such enemies of the régime as we have been described to be; I assure you she will receive only deference and respect at our hands."

Ayguesvives: "Well, if you will not give direct advice, can't you give me a hint that will be of use to us?"

Thiers: "In my opinion, the Empress by prolonging her stay in Paris is running the risk of marring a situation which has not been without dignity, which will remain, I trust, without danger, but which seems to me to be advantageous neither to herself nor to the country."

The Orleanists, were, therefore, clearly of the same opinion as the republicans on this point, that the Empress should leave Paris. One would have thought from the way they talked, that the salvation of the country depended on her departure. Perhaps they were right. But this view was not shared by all the ministers, and I confess that the Empress

was uncertain as to what was the right course to pursue at this critical moment.

On the night of September 3rd, the Empress retired very late, and got only a few hours' rest, if agitated sleep could be called rest. She rose very early, heard mass in the oratory and was ready to receive the ministers before half past eight. Eugénie still held the opinion that the revolution would not really become a fact, or, at least, that it would not break forth so soon as some of her friends feared.

Just as the ministerial council was about to begin its sitting, General Trochu was announced, he having, at length, made up his mind to answer the Empress' invitation to come and consult with her. M. Chevreau, who still had some hope that Trochu would aid us, suggested that the Empress receive the general before the sitting of the ministers began. This was done, and General Trochu was immediately admitted to the Empress' presence. He opened the conversation with these words: "Madame, the hour of great danger has come. We will do our duty." He then went on talking vaguely, giving utterance to sentiments which lacked warmth and energy. It soon became evident to the Empress that he did not intend to commit himself, that he meant to play a selfish part and that he was not disposed to put on his uniform, place himself at the head of the troops and the national guard and stand between the Legislative Body and the mob. If he had done this, it is highly probable that the Chamber would not have been invaded by the populace a few hours later on that day.

When, after the interview, the Empress entered

the council chamber, M. Chevreau approached her and begged to know the result. Eugénie's reply was simply a sign which meant that nothing was to be hoped for in that quarter. The ministers then examined the situation from every possible point of view and studied the means for preventing the peril. The agitation of the previous day, Jules Favre's resolution looking to the deposition of the Emperor, and above all, the police reports which were being constantly sent in, all went to prove that an attempt at insurrection would be tried that day. The necessary military measures had been taken, but it was also imperative to decide what was to be done in case the rioters should prove stronger than the troops. The first plan that occurred to the minds of all the ministers was whether it would not be wise, in case of defeat, to transport the seat of government to some large provincial town, to convene the Legislature there, and to strive to hold out against the Parisian insurrection. The suggestion was good in itself, and was successfully tried a few months later by Thiers on the outbreak of the Paris Commune. But one of the great objections to the proposal was the imminence of the Prussian siege of Paris. The Empress asked her advisers if such a step would not risk "the adding of the flail of civil war to the already overwhelming disasters of the country, weaken the possible resistance of the capital, and render the city an easy prey to the enemy? I fear that the consequent existence of two rival French governments would be fatal to the best interests of the nation. If we fall, it must be without complicating in any way the work of resistance to the common foe." The only practical course, there-

fore, seemed to be to strive to prevent the success of the approaching revolution and to try and nip it in the bud. With this end in view, the council was of opinion that the Legislative Body should be more closely associated with the executive power, and many conflicting opinions were expressed on this point.

M. Buffet, who was minister of finance in the cabinet which preceded the war, advised the ministers to draft a message in which the regent would hand over all power to the Legislative Body, which would then nominate an executive committee. The proposition was an extreme one, and there was a serious objection to it: the Legislative Body was bound up with the Empire, and if the Empire fell, the Legislative Body fell with it. "Far better would it be," said one of the ministers and not the least important of the body, "if there yet remains time, to reorganize the regency." "But is there time?" the Empress inquired. "There's the rub," replied this same minister, in English. Buffet's proposal was finally modified and it was decided to ask the Legislative Body to choose five members who should form a Regency-Council, which should nominate the ministers. It was further suggested that General Palikao be the chief of this council with the title of Lieutenant General. Thus the regency was maintained, the Empire and the constitution were untouched and the whole existing administration continued. There was, in fact, no change of a radical nature, which was of capital importance at a moment when all the resources of the country were needed to cope with the coming invasion. "The plan was practicable and it was wise," said the Emperor later. But it

was unfavorably received by the Legislative Body. The more timid members were frightened by the word "regency" and the confiding of the lieutenant generalship to General Palikao, who was supposed at that very moment to be contemplating a coup d'état. It looked too much like a challenge flung in the face of the members of the Left. Yielding to the wishes of a great number of the deputies who were hastily consulted, Palikao consented to replace the word Regency by that of Government, and it was hoped by the more sanguine, that thus amended the project might perhaps be passed. But the distracted majority did not reckon with its host, as was soon discovered.

Time was flying fast. The Legislative Body was to meet at one o'clock, and its president, M. Schneider, had already left the council-chamber to return to the Palais Bourbon, where were also pouring in reports from all parts of the city announcing the coming of the gathering storm. M. Schneider forthwith took measures to meet it. From the War Office and Police Headquarters came immediately soldiers and policemen, who were properly stationed around and in the court-yard of the edifice. But the fatal weakness of the defense lay in the fact that it was unfortunately not possible to trust all the troops; the police and the mounted soldiers could alone be relied upon. Another unfortunate element in the military situation was there being no real head, for the Imperial party felt sure that General Trochu would not take the energetic measures and his lieutenants were in about the same mood. Furthermore, General Caussade, who commanded the troops held in reserve, exercised no authority, was

more or less ill, dazed by the complex state of affairs, worried about the part he was called upon to play, and yet rather ashamed to give up without a blow. "What sort of influence would he have if brought face to face with the mob, in case the insurrection were to break out?" This question was asked within my hearing by one of the ministers; and many months afterwards came this reply, "An Espinasse or a Forey was much needed in such trying circumstances," said the Emperor one day when the conversation turned on the events of 1870.

The hour fixed for the meeting of the Legislative Body was drawing near. Many persons who were not deputies had managed to get into the chamber by one means or another. The house was tottering on its base; nobody seemed to give orders; the doorkeepers felt the general lack of authority and were careful. As soon as the public galleries were thrown open, they were filled by characters who were better known to the police than to the court. All this was the disorder which precedes a revolution. In the corridors, the atmosphere was much the same. Rumors of the deposition of the Emperor were spreading. Former members of the old Mountain party of 1848, that is, the extreme republicans, were now outspoken. The Empress learned much later that when some one mentioned the regency to him, Etienne Arago exclaimed: "The Emperor is in prison and, according to the civil code, the wife should be where her husband is!" The remark was bandied about amidst much laughter. Along with the old war-horses of republicanism, had slipped in, too, the popular speakers in public meetings, and among others a certain fellow rejoicing in the nick-

name of Wooden Pipe, known at republican clubs and political meetings for his popularity and joviality. Persons bordering on the loafer class had also managed to squeeze in. Some of those who could not get in were even bolder than those who had succeeded. One of this class sent this note to one of the door-keepers: "My wife and daughter desire to be present at the invasion of the assembly!"

The text of a resolution emanating from M. Thiers was already circulating on the floor of the House. It read as follows: "In consequence of the vacancy of the throne, the Chamber nominates a Government Committee of National Defense. A constituent assembly will be convoked as soon as circumstances permit." M. Thiers asserted that if his plan were adopted, the Left would side with the majority. "But," remarked a deputy, "though the word is not there, your resolution really spells deposition," to which M. Thiers replied: "I am simply stating an evident fact. Isn't the throne vacant when the Emperor is a prisoner and the Prince Imperial is outside of France?" But the wording of the resolution was altered, nevertheless, and the first phrase "in consequence of the vacancy of the throne" was made to read "in consequences of the present state of affairs." But many of the deputies of the majority hesitated to agree to vote for such a resolution; on account of their oath of allegiance, there seemed to be perjury in such acquiescence. They wished the regent to authorize the Legislative Body to assume executive powers; then there would be no color of usurpation in the action. This suggestion brought to the fore again the proposal made at the Tuileries that very morn-

ing by M. Buffet. So he was requested to come to the Empress and obtain from her the great sacrifice "which would quiet every conscience and remove all hesitation." "The popular tide is coming on with furious haste; the sitting is becoming tumultuous; there is not a moment to be lost." It was Thiers who spoke thus to M. Buffet, urging him to undertake the mission. So he started, accompanied by several of his colleagues, M. de Pierres and M. d'Ayguesvives, deputies, who had been attached to the Imperial household, went in advance to prepare the Empress for the coming of the committee. One of the delegation gives this heretofore unpublished account of the trying interview which followed. This description, most complimentary to the Empress, is of great value, and I have decided to include it here.

"M. Buffet was spokesman on this occasion, when, throughout, the Empress showed the greatest calm and energy. He began in these words: 'The proposed step, better than any other, meets the needs of the situation. It has the advantage not only of leaving the country absolutely free as regards the future form of government, but does not weaken the moral authority of the Legislative Body, a matter of paramount importance as it will thus be in a better position to maintain order and organize the defense of the country. If, however, we, who are bound by oath to support the Empire, should try to wield executive power and establish a government commission without having first been requested by the regent to do so, we would lose moral force and credit, and could not long withstand the storm, unless we submit to the passions and demands of

the revolutionary party. If we offered any resistance to these demands, we would be reminded that we have no legal authority and cannot claim submission to a usurped power. But if, on the contrary, a governing commission is named by the Legislative Body on the invitation of the regent, we deputies do not violate our oath and our commission is perfectly legal, when we may hope that all lovers of order and all citizens devoted to their country without distinction of party, may come warmly to the support of the commission in its efforts to steer the nation safely through the present terrible crisis.'

"In his turn, Comte Daru, another member of the delegation, set forth his views in these words: 'Be good enough, Madam, to consider the position in which your refusal to meet our wish would place the Legislative Body. We are bound by an oath to remain faithful to the Empire, and those of us who mean to keep that oath cannot act on this resolution of M. Buffet's until you address to the Chamber a message authorizing it to enact any measure required by the public welfare. It will not be difficult for us to agree on what those measures should be and thus you will have the merit of having saved France from another revolution which could only add further evils to those already suffered from the invasion. In a word, with your consent, we will create a government from Parliament which will have the approval of all peaceable citizens. Unparalleled misfortunes demand exceptional measures; and it is better that such exceptional measures be taken in virtue of an agreement between all the regular and legal authorities. *De facto* if not *de*

jure, the executive power is in the hands of the Legislative Body, which represents the nation and which can do everything to-day but which may be unable to do anything to-morrow. Furthermore, Madam, you have received from the Emperor only restricted and insufficient powers, which do not permit you to cope efficaciously with such a formidable crisis as that through which we are now passing. M. Buffet has very truly said that everything is shaken and tottering, everything is threatened and the foreign enemy is at our gates. Furthermore, Madam, you cannot, because of these same limited powers even select a new cabinet, if such an act should become necessary.'

"The other members of the deputation supported their spokesman, while the Empress, never interrupting, listened calmly to all that was said, though, as she privately said, 'each sentence revealed a new danger and each word struck as a knife into my anguished heart.' Finally, mustering up all her strength and courage, she said:

" 'You intimate, gentlemen, that the method which you propose will not affect any future decisions which may concern the final form of government. But you lay down as a condition that I forsake the present government and abandon, at the moment of the greatest danger, the post whose defense has been intrusted to me. I cannot, I must not consent to do this. To-day, it is the future that causes me the least anxiety; not of course, the future of France, but the future of our dynasty. The trials through which I have just passed have been so great, so terrible, that at the present moment, the matter of preserving the crown for the Emperor and my

son touches me very little. My only desire now is to perform faithfully the duty which has been imposed upon me. If at the present juncture, the Legislative Body thinks that I am a source of weakness and that the name of the Emperor is an obstacle and not a force, if we are overthrown and deposition is voted, I shall not complain. I shall then leave my post with honor, I shall not be guilty of deserting it. But to my mind, the only sensible line of conduct and the only patriotic course for the representatives of the country to follow is to draw closer to me, to gather round my government, to put aside for the moment all internal questions which may divide us and to firmly unite all our efforts to drive back the foreign invasion. Let me call your attention to the example offered you by the Cortes of Cadiz, which was so faithful to their captive king and which was rewarded for its unchanging devotion by the final triumph of its cause. As for me, I am ready to meet any danger and to follow the Legislative Body wherever it decides to take a stand to organize resistance to the common enemy. But if resistance is not possible, might it not be probable that my intervention could be useful in obtaining better terms from the victors? For I may inform you that the representative of a great power—I refer to Russia—has offered to propose a mediation of the neutral states on the basis that no territory is to be taken from France and that the Imperial government is to be left standing. I replied that I was disposed to accept the first condition, but I was absolutely opposed to the second condition. The maintenance of the dynasty is a matter which concerns the country alone and I shall

never permit, if I can prevent it, foreign powers to mix up in our home affairs.'

"The Empress had summoned up all her energy in order to make this noble speech, and the delegates were touched and most respectful. But they did not share the sovereign's optimism, and they did not feel that it was a moment to be swayed by chivalrous considerations. Under similar circumstances, the representatives of Hungary had cried: 'We are ready to die for our Queen Maria Theresa!' But the deep feeling which gives birth to such a sentiment exists only in countries where the monarchical idea is strongly rooted, which alas, is not the case in France. Consequently, the delegation, while profuse in words of praise for 'this excellent speech,' and while pitying the wife and admiring her abnegation and energy were not ready to offer their blood for their sovereign; so they coolly advised her to abdicate! Thereupon, the Empress repeated what she had said about burying home differences and rallying to a man around her and the government, and then she added: 'But if my holding power is considered an obstacle to the defense of the country, would it be too great a favor for a woman to ask who is ready to descend from the throne, that she be allowed to remain in Paris? No matter where my residence may be, no matter what my rank may be, will the Legislative Body suffer me to remain at the capital so that I can share its sufferings and its dangers?'

"After these words, there was a long pause. The delegates were much moved and could not hide their emotion. When he had regained his composure M. Buffet replied as follows:

"'The maintenance of the regency would indeed be the best plan. Personally, I would be disposed to adopt it. But I consider it my imperative duty not to hide the fact that, in the present state of mind both inside and outside of the Legislative Body, that plan appears to me to be absolutely impracticable, whereas, if our plan is adopted, with the consent of the regent, there is a good chance of our being able to group together all the energies of the nation, putting in the background all thought of the future form of government, and thus attaining a large part of the patriotic object which your Majesty and all of us have at heart.'"

One day, several months later, the Emperor made this comment on this scene: "The Empress was in the right and M. Buffet, in his speech, acknowledged the fact. The only truly political solution of the problem was the maintenance of the regency and the existing state of things; a close union of the regency and the Legislative Body. All other schemes were sure to lead to a revolution. It should have been evident to all that a government set up by the Legislative Body, whether owing its origin to the deposition of the Emperor or the abdication of the Empress, was sure to find itself face to face with two alternatives—it must lean for support on the conservative side of the house, or call to power the members of the Left. In the first case, the new government would find itself met by the same difficulty as the regency, and in the second case, it would soon become a slave of the revolutionary movement. It was a strange illusion to imagine that the Left, after having succeeded in pushing aside the Imperial government, would accept a government

set up by the deputies chosen under this very régime. Jules Favre and his friends saw political power within their grasp and they did not intend to be kept from enjoying it by those who had been Bonapartists. It should have been clear to everybody, that they must be either opposed or surrendered to. There was no middle course."

The delegate who has already been quoted continues his narrative as follows: "Comte Daru spoke again, saying: 'The powers which your Majesty possesses do not permit you to act in such a way as to be able to defend yourself and the country. If to-day you consent to come to some agreement with the Legislative Body, you will put it in our power to accomplish regularly what otherwise will probably to-morrow be done irregularly. When popular passions are excited, there is the danger that everything will be overthrown. If once a government is set up at the City Hall, we will not be in a position to combat successfully both it and the foreign foe, to fight home troubles and outside ones too. In a word, we will be in a most lamentable position. Hence it is that patriotism demands all and every sacrifice. The Prussians are only forty leagues from the capital and the revolution at home is drawing nearer and nearer. I beseech your Majesty not to make possible the setting up of an ephemeral authority, which cannot last and which would bring misfortune on us all.'

"After such persistent appeals from the delegates, the Empress could no longer conceive a doubt as regards the disposition of the Legislative Body in respect to herself. Moreover, at each moment during the interview came reports from police head-

quarters, which the Empress handed to the delegates, and which contained alarming accounts of the ever increasing effervescence of the popular centers of the capital. Suddenly the news came that the manifestants were advancing on the Place de la Concorde. 'I now realize,' said the Empress, 'that the Legislative Body has not sufficient energy to carry through a policy of resistance and that the government is suddenly going to find itself between two fires,—one, the animosity of the enemies of the Empire; the other, the weakness of the government itself. I should prefer to defend to the bitter end the power I hold from the Emperor; but what am I to do? As a constitutional sovereign I cannot act without the assistance of the Chambers. They give me none; in fact, the lower House is striving to take from me what little power is still left in my hands! I am consequently reduced to powerlessness and may have to yield in spite of myself.' At this very moment, Baron de Pierres, who was much devoted to the Empress and had been her first equerry, said to her earnestly: 'I beg of your Majesty to hand over your powers to the Chamber, which can alone save the country from a revolution which will be worse than any France has yet known.' 'It is the only act that will protect the future prospects of the dynasty,' added Comte d'Ayguesvives. The Empress replied, repeating what she had already said: 'Do you think I care for further power? I hold no longer the crown of the days of glory and festivity; these are passed. Nothing can soften the painful memories of the present hour and I shall bear the mourning of France eternally in my heart.' At this point, messengers arrived from the Palais

Bourbon, stating that the mob was increasing, that they had just broken the eagles which adorned the pillars of the edifice; and, a moment later—it was M. de Gardanes, a deputy, who brought this information—we learned that the very assembly hall was invaded. Thereupon, the Empress yielded, saying: 'Personally, I think this is a mistake; but you wish it, gentlemen, and I am ready to give up my own for your opinion. But I must act regularly. I desire that my cabinet be consulted in the matter. If my ministers agree with you as to the wisdom of the course which you propose, no further opposition will come from me.' Then, after a few farewell words of thanks from Comte Daru, the delegates returned to the Palais Bourbon. It should be added that several times during the interview Admiral Jurien de la Gravière, the Emperor's aide-de-camp, who had been left with the Empress as her confidential adviser during the regency, endeavored to persuade M. Buffet that it was still possible to act with energy and to establish a solid government, provided this government should assemble outside of Paris. But M. Buffet shook his head sadly and replied: 'It is too late; we have only time now to make it possible for the Empress to escape in safety.' "

In the meanwhile, what had happened at the Palais Bourbon? Hardly had the sitting been opened when M. de Kératry moved that the troops around the edifice be withdrawn. He saw that they would interfere with the approaching demonstration of his friends. While in the tribune he exclaimed: "In the name of the Opposition I protest against our being surrounded by the municipal

guards and the police. Their places should be filled by the national guard. Why has the Minister of War given orders in direct opposition to those of General Trochu?" This question provoked quite a tumult on the floor. It showed that the deputies of the Opposition and the military governor of Paris were already in collusion, that both parties were agreed to prevent a true defense of the Legislative Body; for if this were not the case, M. de Kératry would hardly have dared to state publicly that the orders given by General Trochu differed from those given by General Palikao, unless he had been cognizant of the real state of affairs, such a remark would have been impossible. Though heart-broken —for he had just learned that his only son had fallen mortally wounded at Sedan—General Palikao defended his cause with energy. "I maintain," he exclaimed in the tribune, "that I am free to take what measures I see fit for the protection of the Legislative Body." "He was perfectly right," was the comment of the Emperor made on this passage of the Prime Minister's speech, when he read it, somewhat later. The general then went on to lay before the deputies the plan proposed by the cabinet to meet the emergency. The phrase "regency council" was to be replaced by "governing council," and this council, which was to consist of five members, was to be chosen by the Legislative Body, and it, in turn, was to nominate the ministers, General Palikao was to be given the title of Lieutenant General of the Council.

When the Prime Minister had finished reading the proposed plan of the government, great was the astonishment on all sides of the House. In the first

place, the regent was not even mentioned therein, while General Palikao calmly bestowed on himself the somewhat obsolete and high-sounding title of Lieutenant General. The Left was prompt to make the most of the coldness and hesitation with which this strange proposition was received by the Legislative Body. It made easier the consideration of M. Jules Favre's radical resolution for the simple deposition of the Empire, and for M. Thiers' equally plain and decided measure for entrusting the Legislative Body with the nomination of a committee of national defense. The shrewd old politician quickly remarked: "I neither suppress nor maintain the Empire, I leave the future to God and circumstances, especially to the latter!" The Emperor said later: "M. Thiers always liked to leave the future unfettered and to propose only temporizing measures." Forty-eight deputies had signed M. Thiers' resolution and the committee named to report on the various propositions were unanimously in favor of it. They considered it the best compromising measure possible under the circumstances, as it reduced to a minimum the illegality of their forced acts, and thus gave the revolutionary leaders less to criticize. "It will now be possible for us to wait until the country is in a state to make known its real wishes," exclaimed Thiers. A move was made to find a proper building where the future committee could safely meet, and a chairman was being selected to report to the House on the result of the deliberation. An hour at least would be required to complete these things. But could one hope for so much time? That was the question. For, while these committee deliberations were going

on, intruders were seen passing beneath the windows of the Palais Bourbon and trying to climb in. At first, there were but few of these interlopers; then the number began to increase rapidly and cries were heard of "Deposition, revolution, republic!" This was ominous. The manifestation was rapidly assuming the character of an unruly mob, and it was more and more doubtful whether, while the deputies deliberated, the growing insurrection could be held in check.

Outside the Palais Bourbon, the turmoil was greater than inside the gates and garden. Groups of excited men came rushing from the rue de Rivoli and the rue Royale on to the Place de la Concorde, eager to cross over the bridge to the Legislative Body. But, as has already been said, the passage was barred by a double row of mounted police and guards backed by ordinary policemen. But their effectiveness was nullified by the presence of detachments of national guards who had come together of their own accord, whose real intentions were well known and who were doing their best to get into the Palais Bourbon. The military authorities had not had time to form any good plan of concerted action and the man—General Caussade—who was supposed to command was worn out with fatigue and illness. He does not appear to have at first grasped the fact that the national guard was really a danger to public order, but supposed the men were obeying orders given by the authorities. So they were suffered to pass through the military lines, while others, though they did not wear so much as a military cap, followed in their wake. It was not very long before the mistake was realized; but then

it was too late to correct it,—the horse of the siege of Troy had penetrated into the citadel.

The safety of the Legislative Body depended upon whether the regulars on the bridge could withstand the pushing of the national guards who, stopped in their passage to the Palais Bourbon, were determined to carry their point, whether or no. At first, they sent word to the officials of the Legislative Body and asked to be allowed to be the protectors of the assembly. But the officials answered that their powers did not go beyond the walls of the Palais Bourbon. The persistent guards then carried their request to General Caussade, who did not know what to reply. He had received instructions to spill no blood: "It is the absolute order of the Empress," he kept saying, and it was true. "As all was weakness around him" the Emperor has said, "the general became weak too." This, also, is only too true; for instead of encouraging the police in their earnest efforts to keep order, he finally yielded to the demands of the national guards and supported them as against the regular troops, finally giving orders to the latter to return. The police captains respectfully urged that they remain at their posts, but the stern command of the general left no choice but to obey. Their place was immediately taken by the national guards, the good and loyal companies mixed up with the bad and disloyal. It was plain now that the iron gates of the Palais Bourbon were the only protection between the Legislative Body and the mob, and it was evident that the onrush of the ever-increasing human wave would soon sweep that barrier from it. The soldiers on duty within were faithful, but the railings would

soon be torn down, and these few men would be easily overpowered. In the meanwhile, republican deputies began to pass through the gates to speak with their "friends" without, and when they went out and when they came back, some of these "friends" slipped in. Then members of the national guards began to squeeze through; finally it was impossible to shut the gates again and the hall of the Legislative Body was in direct communication with the street! This was the beginning of the end; the insurrection was now master of the Palais Bourbon. "The factions were triumphing over the moderates," was the excellent way in which the Emperor summed up the situation at this moment of that memorable day.

But the members of the Left did not like this invasion of the revolutionary clubs. They wished to direct the popular movement but not to be directed by it. "They evidently asked themselves," remarked the Emperor later, "what value could be attached to the establishment of a government brought about by the revolutionary element of the population. Born of unexpected circumstances, they naturally felt that it might be swept away in the twinkling of an eye. If a bold and courageous leader arose while there was yet time; if a military chief gave energetic orders, backed by a large armed force; if the military governor of Paris, mindful of his oath, came forward and reëstablished order; if the majority of the Legislative Body, feeling that it was not entirely forsaken by the country, should suddenly regain its lost vitality,—then the Left felt there might be a struggle, blood would certainly be shed and nobody could possibly foresee on which

side would be the victory. Some of the men of the Left grasped the full meaning of this popular movement, saw its great danger and attempted to moderate the effervescence which might have been fatal to their cherished plans."

Touching exhortations were heard, or rather it was visible that such exhortations were being attempted by Crémieux and Glais-Bizoin; but their words were entirely drowned by the surrounding din. Gambetta, ardent though he was for the fall of the Empire, warned the factious element of his party, and begged them not to compromise liberty by such excesses. His thundering voice made itself heard for a moment above the uproar, and cheers broke forth. At the same time, many of the deputies left the lobbies and reëntered the hall. Thereupon, M. Schneider rose and began to speak. He seconded Gambetta's appeal, preached moderation and proclaimed his devotion to the Legislative Body, to liberty and the public welfare. For a moment, it looked as if this good advice would be followed and the sitting resumed. But it was simply the lull before the storm. The torrent was growing stronger and stronger. Those who had invaded the hall could not retire, even if they had wished to do so, for they were pushed forward by those coming behind. Perceiving that all his efforts, as well as those of Gambetta, were useless, the President finally adjourned the sitting and retired, amidst great personal danger, to his official residence.

"It had been much questioned whether Gambetta was sincere in his efforts to reëstablish order," says the Emperor. "Many persons have believed that the future dictator simply wished to put him-

self in a good light by giving excellent advice which he knew would not be followed. But it is more probable that he really meant what he said, for it was to his own and friends' interest to check the insurrectionary movement, which had gone as far as they wanted. But it cannot be denied that certain members of the Left were a party to the invasion of the sitting of the Legislative Body, for they introduced many outsiders into the palace enclosure, and it was their intention to coerce the members of the majority by means of violent threats, though it was not probably their purpose to break up the assembly, as was finally done; in a word, they wished to accomplish their own ends by aid of the mob, but they did not all wish to accomplish the ends of the mob."

At this point, some of the ministers went to the Tuileries to tell the Empress of the alarming incidents that were taking place. She learned from them that Gambetta had especially come to the fore within the last quarter of an hour. When he saw that he could not stem the rushing wave, he threw himself into the mêlée and took the lead in the movement which he had at first sought to arrest. Perhaps he thought that with his popularity he might become master of the situation. However this may be, he hastily drew up a motion proposing the deposition of the Emperor. This was done at the moment when the ministers left the Chamber for the Tuileries. "But," as one of them said to the Empress, "I don't see who there is to vote upon it, for there can't be an honest quorum present, many deputies being in the lobbies and still others having followed M. Schneider when he left the hall." But what really happened was this:—the intruders themselves voted

Gambetta's motion, while a few deputies protested against such absolutely irregular proceedings! One of these was a good friend of the Empress, the old Marquis de Piré, who, leaning on a stick, bravely addressed words of blame to the noisy crowd. But the intrepid veteran had not many imitators. Nor was there any hope of accomplishing something in this wise. One of the ministers heard this remark of Régère, who figures later in the Commune. Turning to M. Thiers, he cried: "You know how revolutions are made. The people will not wait any longer for you to act. As you don't seem to be ready, we will ourselves vote for the deposition of the Emperor."

Now Jules Favre again appeared on the scene and his act was a decisive one. He felt more keenly than many of his friends the danger of establishing a government in the midst of such disorder, and doubtless recalled a similar day during the Republic of 1848, when, on May 15th of that year, the people attacked the assembly and were repulsed. He had now but one thought, turning the mob aside as one turns a torrent that one cannot dam. So seizing the occasion offered by an increasing cry of "Hurrah for the Republic" Jules Favre shouted at the top of his voice: "This is not the place for proclaming the Republic. It should be done at the City Hall. Follow me there. I will lead the way!" The suggestion was immediately acted upon, and the crowd, led by Jules Favre and other republican deputies, started for the City Hall, along the quay. As they passed the Tuileries, some were in favor of entering it. But this proposal was not carried out, and the Empress was left in peace for a short time

longer. The cavalcade reached the Place de Grève at the moment when the big clock in the tower struck the hour of 4 p. m.

Everything had been remarkably quiet all the morning around the City Hall. The offices were empty, as it was Sunday. As the danger of riots appeared to increase, detachments of infantry were sent to the spot; but their conduct caused great anxiety at the Tuileries: cries of "Hurrah for the Republic!" were heard in the companies and many soldiers left the ranks. So when Jules Favre and his friends arrived, nobody was surprised to see that the troops did not offer the slightest resistance and that some of the officers even exchanged friendly greetings with the newcomers. These facts were immediately communicated to the Empress, which precipitated matters at the Tuileries. Then the mob rushed into the City Hall; the national guards stuck flowers in the barrels of their guns; men embraced one another; and though there was some shouting, but very little damage was done. However, a painting by Horace Vernet, representing the Emperor, was cut to pieces. This act was immediately made known at the Tuileries, whether maliciously or not it was never found out. But it much affected the Empress and more than anything else showed her the real feeling of the mob. "Politics triumphed over art," said the Emperor, referring, at a later date, to this and other similar mutilations of the portraits of himself and the Empress.

The first step had thus been taken and with the greatest ease; the people were up and stirring. But it was now necessary for the deputies of the Left to take the second step, that is, to found a

government. This was not so easy. The Emperor has well said: "Their plan had been much more than fulfilled; but this was not the way they had dreamed of bringing about the revolution. They had hoped that the first step would be taken at the Palais Bourbon and that a transitory government would be formed, consisting of, perhaps, Thiers, Schneider, Trochu, and possibly even Palikao, along with three or four members of the Left, among whom would have been Picard, the most moderate of this group. This cabinet was to carry on the affairs of the nation for a brief period and was to be succeeded by the Republic, for by that time, according to their calculations, the Empire would have become impossible and a monarchy would be still a mere chimera. But the mob, acting on a sudden impulse and without reflection, had far outstripped the prearranged plans of these men of the Left; the lower rungs of the ladder had been overstepped and they suddenly found themselves at the top. Unable to restrain the demagogues, the Left was now obliged to take the lead in this popular movement. But they rightly felt that it was problematical whether they would be able to sway the excited minds of the people, urged on by such visionary men as Delescluze and Millière; and later events showed that there was good ground for doubt on this very important point."

The extreme element of the Left, the very men whom the Emperor had in view in the reflections just given, wandered about the room where the deputies were gathered at the City Hall, and, dreaming of realizing all their social utopias, had circulated among the crowd below the names of Blanqui,

Félix Pyat, Delescluze, and Flourens, as fit members of the future republican government, all of whom, a few months later, were identified with the Commune. Jules Favre and his friends were frightened. The former addressed the crowd, but only half caught their ear. The leaders of the Left were much embarrassed, and the Tuileries trembled for France. For a moment, the Empress and her friends again thought that the sensible men of all parties would see that the best course lay in firmly rallying round the Empire, which was not yet completely lost. To them it was only too evident that, unless the moderates at the City Hall got the control of the situation, "the social revolution" would break out, and the republic, as desired by the Left, would be impossible. Fortunately for the latter party, at this moment a plan was hit upon which seemed to avert, at least for the time being, this grave danger. It was agreed that the temporary government should be composed exclusively of the deputies elected at Paris and in the Department of the Seine, in which the capital is situated. By this means, most of the dangerous element of the republican party was eliminated. This was an important step from the point of view of the moderate Left.

Now "the Trochu question" came to the fore again. Jules Favre and his colleagues were as anxious about the position of the general as the Empress had been. "He would not go over to the Tuileries," the Emperor had well said; "and it now remained to be seen whether he would go over to the City Hall. But as it was harder to stand between the two than to go over to one or the other, Trochu, who didn't like to do hard things, naturally

decided to go to . . . the City Hall!" But at this critical moment of September 4th, General Trochu was nowhere to be found. He had not been seen at the Tuileries since the morning; he was not at the Palais Bourbon; "he was not in fact anywhere that duty required him to be," as the Emperor has well put it. As has already been said, the Empress warned him in the morning that an insurrection was brewing. At 10.30 M. Schneider's secretary informed him that a riot was feared at the Legislative Body and that the President counted on him to defend the deputies. But Trochu did not move. Towards two o'clock, General Lebreton, a deputy, much alarmed at the rapid strides made by the insurrection and the hesitating attitude of the regular troops, as well as the threatening conduct of the national guards, went to see the military governor of Paris. But he was told that the general was too busy to receive anybody. The deputy insisted, however, on being admitted, and he finally succeeded.

After hastily explaining the situation, General Lebreton said: "On account of your great popularity, General, you can save the Legislative Body, and we count upon your doing so."

Trochu: "It is quite out of the question. During the past few days, I have not been called upon to take command anywhere, but, on the contrary, have been pushed wholly to one side. General de Palikao has tried to crush me completely, and has succeeded in doing so. It is now too late to call upon me; I can be of no aid."

Lebreton: "You are mistaken, General. It is not yet too late, but there is not a moment to be lost."

General Lebreton, who once laid before the Empress a full account of this interview, which is here utilized for the first time, goes on to say: "General Trochu appeared to yield to my persistency, for he had his horse saddled and started off. I saw him disappear and of course supposed that he was going to the Palais Bourbon. Certainly he was late, but why had he not sooner seen in which direction his duty lay? Afterwards he tried to explain his conduct and brought forward endless arguments with this end in view. One thing, however, remains certain, namely, that in the morning he could have exercised great influence in preventing that which was being got under way, and even at noon, he could have checked the budding revolution and no doubt have saved the government. Whether, influenced by feelings of rancor, he was already conniving with those bent only on overthrowing the Empire, or whether he was desirous of playing later a more individual part, it is certain that at this crisis General Trochu did nothing that he should have done. He forsook the regent, whom he had sworn to defend, and stood by, with arms folded, watching events just as if he were an unconcerned spectator. So it was in this spirit that General Trochu started out when he left me. Like his horse, he probably did not know where he was going or what he was going to do! It is likely, however, that he no more desired to help keep the Imperial Government standing than he did to aid in putting the new City Hall combination on its feet.

"Followed by two staff officers, he crossed the Place du Carrousel, rode along the Tuileries quay and stopped in front of the entrance to the Solferino

Bridge. There, I am told, he meditated for some time, watching the crowd, and then said that it was too dense for him to be able to get through. But this was false, for a little while later, Jules Favre and the deputies of the Left had no trouble in passing over the same spot where the general then stood, and I myself had done the same thing on my way back from my visit to Trochu, to the Palais Bourbon, informing my colleagues there that he was coming to their aid. I have always felt that the real explanation of his stopping short where he did was because he expected to meet there the deputies of the Left on their way to the City Hall, which, indeed, did happen a few moments later. I have also good reason for believing that, when M. de Kératry urged Jules Favre to move rapidly towards the City Hall, he too expected to find the military governor of Paris on the way; for it cannot be that the general was not kept informed of what was going on at the Palais Bourbon. So the deputies of the Left found General Trochu at the Solferino Bridge. Jules Favre shook hands with him and said: 'There is no government yet, but we are going, my friends and I, to set up one at the City Hall; and we would be glad if you would return to your quarters and there await news of us.' Trochu made no reply, nor did he try to find out the true state of affairs. He never enquired whether we at the Palais Bourbon were not desirous of standing firm by what existed. He does not appear to have asked himself the question whether his presence at that moment at the Legislative Body might not have changed the whole face of things. He saw but one thing to do,—to return to his quarters at the Louvre and let things

take their course. So back he went, again passing by the Tuileries, where was a sovereign crushed by misfortune, a woman whom he had promised to defend, for whom he had sworn to die. His elastic conscience was satisfied with the thought that he had sent his aide-de-camp, General Schmidt, to the Tuileries at the moment when he himself left the Louvre. But General Schmidt reached the palace only after the departure of the Empress. The cause of the delay has never been clearly explained.

"So General Trochu sat at the Louvre awaiting instructions from the new government. At five o'clock a delegation arrived, begging his immediate presence at the City Hall. One of the members, the eccentric Glais Bizion, said to him: 'You alone enjoy enough authority to curb the turbulent Parisian populace.' Taking off his uniform, General Trochu put on civilian clothes, and then turning to General Schmidt, said: 'Good-by. We may not meet again. I am going to act Lamartine over there.' Lamartine! Far from that. General Trochu went to the City Hall not to fight against irresponsible revolution, as did Lamartine in 1848, nor to remind the deputies of their duty, nor to bring back to their senses the people who were hypnotized by idle promises made them by persons who knew the promises could not be kept. He went to the City Hall to play a selfish part, to float along with the popular tide and to aid the insurrection on condition that he gained power thereby. The fact is that when he got there, the leaders of the Left were already masters of the situation and had triumphed over the revolutionary party, that was eager to establish a Commune. Therefore, General Trochu

cannot in any way boast of having helped by his presence the moderate cause. He entered the room where the deputies of Paris were in the act of forming their Government of National Defense and addressed them this pompous question: 'Do you intend to protect God, the family and private property?' And they answered this rather vague question with a Yes. Then he continued: 'I am quite ready to join forces with you if I am made the head of the new government. I can be useful to you only in such a position.' The deputies agreed to this not overmodest request. When they first called Trochu to their aid, they had not become masters of the situation, and they felt that he might still be of much use to them in giving the final blow to the Legislative Body which was a legal institution, and in holding in check the revolutionary element which was still full of life. Furthermore, as no one else had asked for the first place, it was easy to give it to General Trochu; so that he who, in the morning of that day, had been military governor of Paris and a subject of the Empire, was, in the evening, chief of an illegal government, born of insurrection!"

Meanwhile what was happening at the Senate and the Legislative Body? The first of these institutions stood nominally at the head of the Imperial system, but its influence had greatly waned with the establishment of the "Liberal Empire." Though several of its members were men of marked ability, uprightness and loyal to the Empire, it was destined to play a modest part in this crisis. When the senators heard what had occurred at the Palais Bourbon, they voted a solemn protest and declared unanimously their devotion to the Empire, in which

respect, by the way, they showed greater courage than the same body in 1814. But it was as a voice crying in the wilderness. Fine speeches were made, but the revolutionists paid no attention to the Senate or its members. The neighborhood of the Luxembourg Palace where the Senate sat was perfectly calm. The edifice was guarded by two hundred customhouse officers, whom General Soumain had brought together for that purpose. But it needed no protection, for nobody seemed disposed to come and attack it. So the senators, one by one, went home, and shortly afterwards M. Floquet, in the name of the City Hall Government, came and put a seal on the doors of the assembly room, and the next day the official journal of the new government contained the laconic announcement: "The Senate is abolished."

But the Legislative Body did not die so easily. For several hours after the departure of Jules Favre and his colleagues, the deputies strove to deliberate. Some two hundred gathered in the dining-room of their president, as their hall was still occupied by a noisy mob. After a confused debate it was decided to send a delegation of eight members to the City Hall, not, however, for the purpose of recognizing the new government, but to confer with their colleagues concerning the foundation of a national government. When they arrived there, Jules Favre had little difficulty in convincing them that their efforts were futile. "For the past month," he said, "myself and my friends have been urging the Legislative Body to assume the reins of government. But you would not listen to us, and now it is too late for you to control the situation. How-

ever, I shall be glad to consult with my colleagues of the Palais Bourbon, and after doing the same thing with my colleagues of the new government, I shall go to the Palais Bourbon this evening." This he did, accompanied by Jules Simon. "We were much touched by the proposal of the delegation," he said; "but in view of what has already happened, there is nothing to be done but to accept the City Hall government. We are thinking now only of how to save France. We represent the maximum of order that can be demanded of the present revolution. We are surrounded by a wild element which would like to take our place, and if we permitted the Legislative Body to remain, we would be swept away from the City Hall, just as you have been from the Palais Bourbon." Jules Favre and his friends then withdrew, when much angry debate followed; but Thier's view finally prevailed. He said: "We have but a few moments more to remain together. We need not dissolve the session, but we should quietly return to our respective homes and remain there as good citizens devoted to our country's welfare. It does not befit us either to recognize or to combat those who are to fight here against the enemies of France. May God aid them!" After signing a protest against what had occurred that day, the Legislative Body, or at least what remained of it, separated never to meet again. It was then ten o'clock at night.

The Emperor Napoleon once made these comments on the revolution of September 4, 1870, and it is with these paragraphs that this sketch may fittingly terminate:

"In the morning of September 4th, France had a regular government; that same evening she was handed over to a body of men who had had no experience in the art of ruling, but were conspicuous only for their systematic opposition to the established order of things and for their rather violent eloquence. None had rendered any real service to his country, with the single exception of Trochu, and he had a remarkably elastic conscience. I have been informed, by the way, that he afterwards admitted that he distrusted his colleagues and expected to perish through them. They preached a liberty, which if granted would become license. Liberty as understood by the Liberal Empire was the only form which a government in France could grant if it were not to fall into anarchy and disorder. For twenty years Jules Favre and his friends had had resort to every possible means to bring about the downfall of the Empire. They had appealed to the worst passions of the populace, had excited envy among the classes and had substituted for love of glory and a high sentiment of national honor—true patriotism, in a word—a false philanthropy made up of a bundle of selfish interests, of material well-being and of luxury. 'Each one in his turn' was their motto, and what was blamed in others was what each one wished to have or to do himself. It was a system which would dissolve society and lead to a revolution without bounds or restraint. Though the troubled situation favored dictatorship, this temporary government was frequently in conflict with its 'tails,' that is to say the more advanced element. The insurrections of October 31st, 1870 and of March 18th following which was the begin-

ning of the Commune, proved that this government did not control events, but that it was the victim of its own origin.

"The men of September 4th published a declaration in which they sought to explain their questionable acts. Among other things, they said therein: 'When a general has failed in his command, it is taken from him; when a government has, by its own fault, imperilled the safety of the country, that government must be overthrown. And that is what France has just done. By forsaking the dynasty which is responsible for all our misfortunes, the country has accomplished an act of justice in the eyes of the whole world. It is the carrying out of a sentence which every conscience approves of. It has been, at the same time, the salvation of our country.'

"It was by means of such bare-faced declarations as these that the people were tricked by the men of September 4th. According to them, the only persons responsible for all the evils then existing were those who had been vanquished, crushed by fate and unlucky circumstances. And yet surely those deputies of the Opposition who refused systematically to vote the appropriations necessary to keep the army up to the right standard were somewhat responsible for what happened in the summer of 1870. Then again, there was no personal power exercised by the regent, the Emperor did not command the army and the ministers were responsible to Parliament. It was really ridiculous to say that despotism was exercised in Paris, where political speakers and the press enjoyed full freedom. It was pure impudence to state that the nation was taking possession of its usurped privileges and

rights, at a moment when the people of a single city was bending the whole country beneath its yoke, annulling the mandates of the deputies and overthrowing a government which, a few months before, has been acclaimed by the whole electoral body throughout the land. The right of insurrection had supplanted national sovereignty, which had been pushed to one side for the benefit of a handful of leaders. Office-holders were released from their oath of allegiance and rebellion was characterized as a grand act of public salvation. In a word, absolutely false ideas and principles had quite obliterated every notion of right and justice. Nothing but the mental aberration which characterized those troublous times can explain the tone and wording of the proclamations issued by the government, or the calm manner in which they were received. No one appeared to realize whither such doctrines would lead the unfortunate people who were ready to accept them. The revolution of September 4th was the result of all these errors and of all the passions then rife in Paris. The entire metropolis may be considered to have been the culprit during those fatal days; but that fact can in no way absolve the men who led the movement nor those who yielded to them, when they should have remained in the straight path of respect for authority and of true patriotism. To abandon, when face to face with the foreign enemy, a government that had made France so great—the first nation in Europe—was to sin against honor and right, to say nothing of ingratitude, a common fault, however, in moments of great public disturbance.

"The leaders of September 4th, have repeated

over and over again that not a drop of blood was shed, insinuating thereby that they simply obeyed a great national movement. This again is false. There was no such movement. Paris was simply taken by surprise, and the rest of France was not consulted. The general elections of February 8, 1871—the first after the fall of the Empire—showed what France thought of the men of September 4th, —they were markedly hostile to the republic. It is quite true that there was no blood shed on September 4th, but we must not forget that the Government of National Defense favored the continuation of the struggle—the War in the Provinces—which led to the deaths of thousands of men and to a humiliating treaty of peace, and which finally ended in the bloody Paris Commune, where Frenchmen fought ferociously against one another. If the birth of the revolution was not so tragic as its closing days, this is not due to the moderation of those who rebelled and those who were benefited thereby, but rather to those who held the reins of power and who left their posts without resisting and in order not to spill any French blood. We cannot forget the dignified attitude of the Empress, her desire that no Frenchman be killed in her defense, her abnegation and resignation under the most painful circumstances,—this it is above all that saved that country from still worse disasters. History will treat with severity, I feel sure, the leaders of that insurrection who did not hesitate to overthrow the established government before the eyes of all Europe and thus brought down upon France fresh and unnecessary ruin."

CHAPTER XIII

THE EMPRESS ESCAPES FROM PARIS

Several persons more or less closely connected with the incidents attending Eugénie's departure from the Palace of the Tuileries on September 4, 1870, and with her subsequent secret journey to England, have written, briefly or in detail, their souvenirs of that event. In the following pages, some of the mistakes made by these writers have been corrected, but what has especially been attempted is to give an account of what the Empress and those in her suite saw, heard and thought during those trying days.

There was some fear, while the mob was invading the Legislative Body on September 4th, lest the Tuileries be also attacked. One after the other, the ministers came over from the Palais Bourbon to the Tuileries and reported what was occurring there. One of these, M. Busson-Billault, said to Baroness of Bourgoing, wife of the deputy: "The Chamber is invaded and the majority dispersed. Men who have been seen begging a smile from the Emperor are now proposing to dethrone him. There is no hope left. We have come to beg the Empress to depart." All the ministers expressed the same view. But the Empress remarked: "I consented to hand over my powers to the Legislative Body, but I hesitate to abandon my post to the insurrectionists."

M. Chevreau, Minister of the Interior, replied earnestly: "The republic has been proclaimed at Lyons, the red flag is unfurled there, and the prefect is under arrest. In an hour, a temporary government will be established in Paris. The mob is increasing rapidly around the Tuileries, the palace will soon be invaded; danger, in a word, is threatening on every side."

The Tuileries was filled with friends, devoted servitors, soldiers ready to share the fate of their sovereign. If the Empress persisted in not going, some of these friends declared that a struggle would be inevitable. "Blood will be shed," one of them remarked, "and I shudder at the thought of another August 10, 1792." Others urged that the palace be defended. But the Empress was opposed to this measure. "To permit people to be killed for the sake of defending my person,—this is quite out of the question," she said, and she remained firm in her determination not to accede to General Lepic's desire to organize a system of defense. But not a minute was to be lost. Something must be done. Then many plans were proposed. Baron David, Minister of Public Works, thought that a special train should be made up in which the Empress would be carried outside of French territory. He even began to examine the time-tables for this purpose. Admiral Jurien de la Gravière suggested that the terminus be Havre. But it was objected that Eugénie was too well known by the public to hope to reach safely that port by train. The admiral then proposed that the place be reached by the Seine on board the *Puebla*. But it was too evident that the flight would be stopped at the first lock in the

river, for this proposal to receive any serious consideration. Another said Lorient would be the best port, as fleet ships were there. But it was easily shown that it was as hard to get to Lorient as to Havre.

In the meantime, the reports from without grew more and more alarming. Everywhere cries were heard of "Down with the Empire!" "Deposition!" "Hurrah for the Republic!" Already the mob had begun to tear down the Imperial eagles and to efface the Emperor's initials from the monuments and buildings, and "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" were being scribbled on the walls in their place. A noisy crowd was even invading the precincts of the Tuileries. Danger was imminent. Nothing was to be hoped for from the Legislative Body. "We must call in Trochu," somebody said. The Empress replied quietly: "His duty requires him to be here, at the post of honor and danger. But it is not for me to remind him of the fact." At this moment Prince Metternich and Chevalier Nigra were introduced. The Austrian and Italian ambassadors had come to offer generously their aid in protecting Eugénie. Then came M. Joachim Pietri, the Prefect of Police, who had been out in the streets, and who confirmed what others had said as to the effervescence reigning throughout the city. "Your Majesty and those about you are in real danger," he said. "Within a quarter of an hour the palace will be invaded by the mob. There should be no hesitation. A mob does not always know what it is doing and might be led to commit a crime." To this warning of the head of the Paris police, General Mellinet, who commanded the detachment of the Imperial Guard sta-

tioned in the court-yard of the Tuileries, now added his advice. He said: "The mob is upon us and will be in these rooms soon unless I am authorized to resist their approach." But again the Empress refused to permit the defense of her person or her family to cost the life of a single Frenchman. The old soldier mournfully returned to his post, still ready to imperil his life if necessary, in order to protect the Tuileries. Then the ambassadors and the ministers made another effort to prevail upon the Empress to leave the palace, and finally she consented. Thereupon, the ministers withdrew, saying to the persons in the outer salon: "The Empress has decided to leave the Tuileries; unfortunately there is nothing else for her to do. We return to the Palais Bourbon to see if anything can be done there to save the situation."

In the outer salon at this moment were many of Eugénie's faithful friends. Princess Clotilde, wife of Prince Napoleon, had come to share the dangers of her sovereign. She was much loved by the Parisian populace, and ran no risk. In fact, when a few hours later, she left Paris, she drove in her carriage, quite unprotected, from the Tuileries to the Lyons station. With her in the outer salon were Viscomtesse Aguado, the Duchesse de Malakoff, the wife of Marshal Canrobert, Baroness de Bourgoing and Mmes. de Saulcy, de Rayneval, de la Poèze and de Sancy. As soon as the ambassadors and ministers arrived, they were all admitted into Eugénie's cabinet and all begged to be allowed to accompany her in her flight. As the Empress advanced to meet the ladies, she noticed that they were sobbing and that all eyes were wet. In the tender-

est tones possible she said to them: "No, I cannot take you with me. You have your husbands and your children. I will not draw any one into my own misfortune. In France, one must not be ill-starred; it is a crime." The Baroness de Bourgoing said: "My husband is at the head of 3,500 volunteers in the Department of Nièvre. What orders has your Majesty for them?" The Empress answered: "Orders! I have now none to give. We must yield to circumstances. I shall never forget what you have done for me, and I thank you. Good-by, Good-by." The Empress then embraced the ladies and they kissed her hands, many of them again saying: "You must let us accompany you." The Empress once more answered: "That is impossible. Adieu, or rather au revoir." "Yes, au revoir," responded all the ladies of the suite. Eugénie turned back several times as she moved away, and waving with her hand a farewell to them, they finally disappeared from her sight. They, too, soon afterwards left the Tuileries, "with heavy hearts," one of them wrote me afterwards.

At about this same moment, General Mellinet returned to the palace, and again insisted on obtaining the authorization to "sweep away all those screaming miscreants" who surrounded the Tuileries. He was met by the Marquis of Castelbajac, who informed him that the Empress had decided to depart. "But we cannot, no, we really cannot, allow ourselves to be throttled like old women without putting forth an arm to defend ourselves," exclaimed the old general, seizing M. de Castelbajac by both arms. "Calm yourself, General," said the marquis; "I have six balls in this revolver, and we

shall not be throttled until they are all used up. But let us wait till the Empress has got well away so that she will not run the risk of being massacred with us." Seeing that there was nothing to be done, the grand old Crimean hero bethought himself to make some use of his great popularity, and, with the approval of M. de Castelbajac, decided to see if he could not at least delay the invasion of the palace, so that we would run less danger. Consequently, he gave orders to lower the flag which always floated over the Tuileries when the Imperial family was there. He then advanced to the mob, which was already rushing into the garden, and getting on a chair, he shouted: "The Empress has left the palace. You are Frenchmen and will not bring dishonor on yourselves by insulting a woman so crushed by misfortunes. So I count on you making no disorder and retiring quietly to your homes." For a moment the onward rush was checked. But it was only for a moment. The light railing which separated the private from the public gardens was soon broken in twenty places and the crowd finding no other obstacle in their way began pushing forwards over the flower beds. In a few moments more they would be inside the palace.

In the meanwhile, the Empress had hastily donned a hat, veil and traveling cloak. Perhaps I may be permitted to quote here from an unpublished letter of one of the ladies-in-waiting, who was present and who says: "A tray containing the untouched lunch of the Empress was on the table. She had eaten nothing since early morning. We begged her to take a few mouthfuls before starting on her uncertain journey, lest she should be overtaken by

faintness. The Empress yielded to our pleadings and hastily swallowed a few morsels of bread. Before starting, she stopped once again to cast a last look on a spot she would never see again. On the table, she perceived among other papers the fatal telegram in which the Emperor announced his defeat and captivity. At first she reached forwards with the intention of picking it up and taking it away with her, then changing her mind she said: 'No, it is better that it be found here,' and placed it in a conspicuous place on her desk." Prince Metternich and Chevalier Nigra now urged promptness and exclaimed to some of the over-anxious ladies-in-waiting: "We will answer for the Empress's safety provided there is no more delay." This assurance they repeated to M. Pietri and M. Chevreau, who were still tarrying with the Empress, but who thereupon took their leave. Again bidding farewell to Viscomtesse Aguado and Comte de la Poèze, Eugénie once more started, followed by Mme. Lebreton Bourbaki, the two ambassadors, Admiral Jurien de la Gravière and M. Conti, the Empress's private secretary. The little party passed through the private apartments, descended to the ground floor and passed through the Prince Imperial's door, to the right of the Tuileries court-yard. A carriage was waiting there as usual; it was the coupé of the aide-de-camp then on duty. The first idea was to make use of this vehicle; but Prince Metternich having remarked that the Imperial cockade and crown might attract attention, it was hastily decided to use the ambassador's own carriage which had no arms and was waiting on the quay. An orderly

went to fetch the carriage, and the party sat down on a bench in the vestibule.

While the orderly was gone to fetch the carriage, which was stationed at some little distance along the quay, considerable commotion was occasioned in the palace by the advent of a noisy crowd which had gained admittance into the Place du Carrousel through the Louvre gates and which came on shouting,—oaths, threats and revolutionary songs all being jumbled together. Immediately the orderly ran back to warn the party not to try and reach the quay in that direction. Thereupon, the admiral went out towards the mob and sought to argue with the people in order to gain time. The railing between him and them still held good in spite of frantic efforts made to tear it down. A small body of infantry commanded by a sergeant surrounded the admiral and was ready, if necessary, to protect him from any violence on the part of the crowd. Having finally got their ear, Admiral Jurien said: "The Empress has left the Tuileries, and there is no necessity of getting excited. I beg of you to be calm." But what could a handful of men do against such a mass of assailants? At that moment, a detachment of national guards came into the courtyard to relieve the regular infantry. The officer in command immediately realized the danger which the admiral was running. "Try and prevent them from breaking down that railing," said the admiral to the officer, and again turning towards the rioters, he shouted: "I tell you, the Empress is no longer here." These national guards were among those who could be depended upon. They obeyed their commander, and when his orders to the crowd were

not listened to, the soldiers beat them back with the butt of their guns, so that the railing was not broken through. The mob finding that they had a master in that quarter, hurried off to try and get through somewhere else. But all this devotion on the part of Admiral Jurien de la Gravière and the national guard was not needed after all. When he got back to the vestibule where he had left the Empress, he found that she had disappeared, for when her party saw what a plight they were in at this side of the palace, they did not venture out, but went back, and taking the galleries of the Louvre, finally found a safe exit at the grand colonnade side of the Louvre, opposite the Place Saint Germain l'Auxerrois. But a word or two more, telling how this was accomplished, may be interesting.

The little party went through the Pavillion of Flora, where it had been decided some time before that the Prince Imperial should henceforth be installed. It presented a rather forlorn appearance, as the workmen's tools and the carpenters' shavings were all strewn about. Thence they reached one of the state rooms where the Empress recalled how, but a short time before, she was seated between the Emperor and the Prince Imperial, and took part in the ceremony when was made known the result of the plebiscitum which preceded the war. Here, too, tools and building materials seemed in sad keeping with the disorder which reigned without. At the end of this room is a door which opens into the picture galleries of the Louvre, and this door was the object of the detour. But unfortunately, it was found locked, and, although a member of the party knocked several times in the hope of attract-

ing the attention of the assistants of the gallery, no one came to our aid. Fortunately, one of the household, M. Thélin, heard by chance that the Empress was endeavoring to escape in that direction; so he hastened to her with a skeleton key, with which he not only opened the first door, but all the others that barred the way to the street, through the picture galleries. Before quitting the galleries, M. Conti and the orderly were requested to leave, so that the party would not be conspicuous from its numbers. The Empress was now left alone with the two ambassadors and Mme. Lebreton-Bourbaki. When they reached the end of their journey, they found the square in front of the Louvre, and especially the archway, filled with people. They heard some hostile cries, such as "Hurrah for the republic!" and "Down with the Spanish woman!" The Italian ambassador, on whose arm the Empress was leaning asked her if she was frightened. "You are holding my arm," she answered; "do you feel it tremble?" At this moment there was a stampede of the mob towards the church, and one of the Empress' party seized the opportunity to hail a cab—all thought of the ambassador's carriage had now to be abandoned—into which the two ladies got and were quickly driven away.

The rôle of the ambassadors was now ended. The part they played has not always been judged in the same way. Some Bonapartists have accused them of having hidden under a chivalrous act a desire to get rid of the regent, whose presence at that moment at Paris embarrassed them and their policies. But the Empress always felt most grateful to them for having protected her when devoted efforts

from others would not have been so successful, and she was never able to see where anything of a political nature entered into their acts on this occasion. The Emperor, also, more than once expressed his deep thanks for the generous manner in which the Prince and the Chevalier conducted themselves during the stormy day of September 4th. "If all the so-called friends of the throne had shown one half the bravery and activity of these two foreign diplomats," said the Emperor in this connection, "we would probably still be in the Tuileries palace."

The cab drove along the Rue de Rivoli and up to a house situated near the Church of St. Augustin, inhabited by M. Besson, a member of the Council of State. But he was out, having gone to the Tuileries to "take the Empress' orders," as he afterwards remarked. So the cabman was told to drive to the Avenue de Wagram, where lived one of the faithful chamberlains of the Imperial court, the Marquis de Piennes. There again the fugitives met with disappointment. On leaving the Tuileries, the Marquis had been entangled in the crowd and had not yet got home. Time was flying. Soon the news of the Empress' departure would be known and then it would be impossible to leave the town. Some temporary shelter must be found from which to reach the frontier. Suddenly Mme. Lebreton thought of Dr. Evans, the American court dentist, who was very devoted to the court's interests and on whom the Empress felt she could surely count. So she now drove to his house in the then Avenue de l'Impératrice. He was out, but was soon expected back, and "the unknown ladies," as the servant described to his master, awaited his coming.

As soon as the doctor returned, he received the Empress with marks of genuine attachment. Dr. Evans had known her since her childhood, when she was Comtesse of Téba he had always been kindly treated at the Tuileries and felt grateful for it. The Empress naturally felt, therefore, that such a man would prove her best protector in such a critical emergency; and what followed showed that she had judged rightly.

When the Empress hastily told Dr. Evans what she hoped he would be able to do for her, he did not hesitate an instant in assuring her of his entire devotion; but asked for a delay before acting. He then held a conference with his old friend, the late Dr. Edward E. Crane, when it was settled that the next morning they would both start with the Empress and make an effort to reach the Channel coast. So Eugénie spent the night under Dr. Evans' hospitable roof, occupying the room of Mrs. Evans, who was at the sea-shore. The Empress slept soundly after the anguish, anxiety and tortures of the preceding days, and arose the next morning quite refreshed. The only change for the journey she made in her attire was to substitute for the little bonnet she had on when she started out from the Tuileries and which left her face too much uncovered, a round hat, belonging to Mrs. Evans, which was provided with a thick veil.

On dying, Dr. Evans left a full manuscript account of the memorable journey from Paris to the coast, and this manuscript, carefully edited by Dr. Crane, was published a few weeks before his own death in 1906. During the progress of the work, it was customary for Dr. Crane to consult the Em-

press whenever she passed through Paris and at her invitation, he and his wife spent some little time at Farnborough. The work is reliable in everything that concerns his carriage drive from Paris to Deauville. But some of the personal impressions of the Empress and Mme. Lebreton may perhaps be given here.

On the morning of September 5th, the two ladies and the two American doctors started in a brown landau. The coachman and the footman had no idea, I believe, who were the persons accompanying their master. They drove down the Avenue Malakoff. The first problem was how to get out of Paris. A barricade and a group of national guards obstructed the Maillot gate where they were to pass. Of course it was of the greatest importance that the Empress be not recognized; so Dr. Evans leant half out of the carriage, really to hide her but ostensibly to ask his way of the guards, who never thought to look inside, and the carriage drove slowly out through the city walls. They halted a few minutes at Saint Germain to rest the horses, and then pushed on as far as Mantes, where the poor animals were found to be absolutely done up, so that nothing further was to be expected from them. Dr. Crane remained with the ladies while Dr. Evans went off to find fresh horses and another carriage. Having found two horses and a more or less shaky vehicle, the journey was resumed. Whenever it was necessary to change horses, difficulties were always encountered. At the Commanderie two wretched mares were scared up, but the landlord of the village found the turn-out so fine that he said to the doctor: "Why, a queen would be contented with such a

grand coach." This remark made them all a little nervous, as they feared, for a moment, that the man had recognized the Empress. But such was not the case. Evreux was crowded, as the prefect was proclaiming the foundation of the republic. It was feared for a moment that the carriage would not be permitted to pass. But the doctor got a special permit from the authorities to let them go on, the reason being that it was given out that there was "a sick lady in the carriage, accompanied by her medical men." Throughout the journey, in fact, the Empress was always referred to as "ailing," and so was left undisturbed. Eugénie had very little appetite and, in truth, she was ailing in spirit—lost in thought most of the time. I fear she was not very companionable, and the rôle of being an invalid exactly suited her state of mind at the moment. The Empress never forgot the mental tortures of this journey, nor the discreet efforts of her American friends to alleviate them.

When the party reached Deauville in the early morning, they went to the Hôtel du Casino, where Mrs. Evans was staying, and then Dr. Evans set out to find a boat in which they might cross the Channel. In the harbor, he saw the *Gazelle,* a pleasure-yacht belonging to Sir John Burgoyne. The weather, which had been very bad during the last few days, had prevented the boat from putting to sea, and it was not the intention of the owner to start for some little time yet. The two American doctors went on board and sent in their cards to the owner. When Sir John appeared, they explained to him the object of their visit, when, after reflection, he said: "I am sorry I cannot help you but, under the cir-

cumstances, it is impossible. I do not wish to get mixed up in political matters, and moreover there is a storm at sea."

Dr. Evans replied: "Sir John, I am an American citizen, and in my country, every man is ready to help a woman, especially when her life is in danger. When her Majesty asked my assistance, I left my Paris home with all that it contains, without giving a thought to the loss my act might cause. But I have noticed another craft in port and I will see what accommodation we can obtain there."

Sir John said in reply: "You must not try there, for that American yacht is not sea-worthy."

"Well, then, we must count on you, Sir John."

"Well, I will consult my wife on the subject."

As a result of this consultation with tender-hearted Lady Burgoyne, it was agreed that the yacht should sail the next morning, and that the fugitives were to come aboard that night. At half past eleven, a police officer visited the yacht, as if he had got wind of the scheme. But Sir John showed him over the boat with assumed indifference, and when he had retired, and Sir John saw him pass over the Trouville bridge, he went to meet the travelers, who were soon afterwards ensconced in the taut little ship and ready to sail. Lady Burgoyne immediately urged the Empress to take some rest. But this could not be as she was absorbed in reading the bundle of Paris newspapers which Sir John had put in her hands, and which told all that had happened at the capital since her departure. The Empress kept awake by swallowing constant sips of coffee. At six o'clock in the morning, Dr. Crane left the boat, but Dr. Evans though feeling

that the Empress was perfectly safe in the charge of Sir John, concluded to cross the Channel also. As the political excitement appeared to be increasing in the town, Sir John thought it wise to tell the crew who were aboard, as they might be called to defend us. All the sailors replied that they would do their duty. But, unfortunately, nothing untoward happened.

The yacht finally weighed anchor at seven in the morning. It was a terrible crossing. A violent tempest assailed the frail bark as soon as it left Trouville. Sir John, conscious of his duty and the responsibility he had assumed, hardly once left the bridge. There was a strong head wind, the deck was constantly washed by big waves, and all perceived that but little advance was being made. At one moment, in fact, there was real danger. M. d'Hérisson, who has told so many inexactitudes about the escape from Paris, pretends that at one moment during the crossing Sir John Burgoyne lost control of himself and turning on Dr. Evans upbraided him for having embarked them all on such a perilous enterprise. But there is no truth in this statement. "Everything cracked around us," said Mme. Lebreton, when she gave an account later of this memorable voyage; "but the Empress, who was used to the sea and liked it, did not appear alarmed at the bad weather. 'The Parisian tempest is a great deal worse,' she quietly remarked." But later while still under the nervous strain produced by these events, the Empress wrote to a friend: "The little ship danced on the waves like a cork. At one time, they said we were lost. But death in the midst of that great tumult then seemed enviable and

sweet to me. I felt that I would disappear and nobody would know whither, so that an impenetrable mystery would have enveloped the end of my days." This was really the feeling that then held possession of her. Towards dawn on the second day out, the wind fell, the sea became calm, and the boat was able to make Ryde harbor, when Sir John Burgoyne immediately informed Lord Granville, Minister of Foreign Affairs, of the Empress' arrival on English soil.

M. d'Hérisson has said that the Empress was ungrateful to Sir John Burgoyne. This is quite false and has been denied by Sir John himself in the *Century Magazine.* When the Empress reached Hastings she hastened to send Lady Burgoyne renewed thanks and accompanied them with a bracelet in souvenir of the event. Perhaps I may, furthermore, transcribe this statement. "When I married a second time, in 1903," Sir John has written, "the Empress made us a present—to Lady Burgoyne and myself—of a magnificent coffee and tea service in silver." Untrue also is much that has been said of a similar nature concerning her strained relations with Dr. Evans, for whom the Empress on the contrary guarded a warm affection till the very end of his life.

CHAPTER XIV

THE EMPEROR AT WILHELMSHÖHE

Although the disaster at Metz had been long foreseen, it threw the Emperor into a state of deep melancholy. The Empress was promptly advised of this change in his moral condition, and seeing in it a danger for the Emperor's physical welfare, she became more than ever anxious to see him, especially as she was desirous also of telling him personally all about the events in which she had lately been called upon to take a prominent part. The Empress resolved, therefore, in spite of the obstacles to go to Wilhelmshöhe, where the Emperor had been held prisoner since the fall of Sedan at the beginning of September, 1870. But not wishing to wholly abandon the Prince Imperial at Chislehurst, the Empress sent a message to Bismarck before starting, to know, if in the event of her going she would be held at Wilhelmshöhe as prisoner of war, or would be allowed to return to her son. Bismarck returned an evasive answer; but the Empress decided to start, in spite of the fact that she had no passport.

One early morning, at the end of October, the Empress left for London accompanied only by Comte Clary and a maid. They were without luggage. The little party took the train to Dover, sailed for Ostend, crossed Belgium, and arrived at Cologne without being recognized. Having reached

Cassel, the Empress asked to be taken before the governor. A few minutes later, she was at Wilhelmshöhe and immediately drove to the castle. Comte Clary entered alone, and was promptly conducted into the presence of the Emperor, who was much surprised when this faithful nobleman entered the room. On seeing him, the Emperor exclaimed: "You here! Why, I have just written to the Empress to ask if she cannot possibly come." There being other persons present, Comte Clary replied: "As soon as the Empress knows your Majesty's wish, she will certainly come." Then he made the Emperor understand that he wished to speak with him alone, and as soon as the others had withdrawn, he told the Emperor that the Empress was in a carriage at the gates. "Is it possible," cried the monarch, much moved; "let her come in at once;" and accompanied by Comte Clary, he went to the porch to meet the carriage which was driving up. Several officers of the household were on the spot and Napoleon had difficulty in mastering his emotions. But as he did not wish to show his feelings in public, he controlled them so completely that he received Eugénie after the tragic events which had separated them for four months, with an expression and manner he would have displayed if he had left her only the day before under the most ordinary circumstances. Even her perfect understanding and knowledge of his character were not quite proof against this seeming coldness, and the Empress at first was pained by the seemingly frigid welcome. Meanwhile, the members of the household drew near, kissing Eugénie's hand, and even seizing the folds of her dress, I was told afterwards.

The Emperor quickly drew the Empress in to his private study, and as soon as the door closed behind them, his mask of impassibility fell and, sobbing, he threw himself into her arms. The relief of that moment, after all the moral sufferings which they had both undergone was almost too intense. Though a blessed comfort after unspeakable torture, the emotion was so keen at first as to be almost heart-breaking. They spent several hours together, during which all the painful experiences of the war, all the anguish of the wife and mother were realized. The Empress told the Emperor the story of her departure for England after the fall of the Empire and the pathetic joy of meeting the Prince Imperial,—Louis! How sweetly the name broke into the conversation. His absence was explained to the disappointed father. "I was not perfectly sure of reaching my destination," the Empress said, "and was unwilling to expose the child to the possible dangers which I might have to face myself." The Empress told the Emperor how she had kept her journey an absolute secret, so that the prince himself knew nothing of it, "or certainly he would have insisted on coming, too." For the first time during this sad interview the Emperor's face wore a smile; they were speaking of his son!

The Empress also explained to the Emperor the negotiations which had been attempted; how General Boyer had come to Chislehurst to seek her in Bazaine's name. She related how she had declined the offers which he had been commissioned to make —offers which had in view the interests of the fallen dynasty, rather than those of bleeding France. In a word, the Empress put the Emperor *au courant*

of this whole matter as given elsewhere in these memoirs.

Two days later, the Empress left Wilhelmshöhe as secretly as she had arrived and reached England before the news of her journey had got abroad. The Emperor felt the greatest benefit from that visit. The harmony which reigned between them was much strengthened, and henceforth became more perfect than ever. Their way of looking at events was identical, and it was agreed that one would do nothing without the other's knowledge.

A few days after this visit, the chiefs of the imprisoned army of Metz arrived at Cassel, and the three marshals who had held command in that unlucky force, visited the Emperor. The unfortunate Marshal Bazaine was the first to enter. The Emperor met him in a very grave mood, but held out his hand to the fallen soldier and talked a long time with him. Though the Emperor could not approve all the conduct of this much-criticized commander, he had not the heart, at least at that moment, to animadvert on his mistakes, shortcomings, and acts which perhaps deserve a still harsher term. Later, shortly before his death, he did not hesitate to declare in intimate circles that Bazaine had been made a scapegoat in several respects.

Some hours afterwards, Marshal Leboeuf came into the room. He walked in with his fine, calm, soldierly face—the face of the loyal officer who had behaved so splendidly at Metz—darkened by deep anguish, for he knew that he was considered responsible for the disasters which had just befallen his country. But here again the warm-hearted Emperor could not be harsh, especially as there was

but little good ground for such a feeling. When he affectionately shook hands with him, the Marshal lost countenance and the Emperor saw that the staunch old warrior was nearly sobbing; that he was biting his lip till it bled in order to keep back the tears.

Grand old Marshal Canrobert was the last to appear. The Emperor threw his arms round the marshal's neck and kissed him several times. Canrobert also was as much moved as the Emperor himself. It was a scene never to be forgotten, I was told by one of those present, to which the striking head of Canrobert gave a peculiar touch of picturesqueness.

When in after years Napoleon III spoke of this reception of the three marshals, he never could wholly conceal his emotion. "At first it was decided," he said, "that all three generals should remain at Cassel with me, but this plan was modified and Bazaine alone stayed, the other two being sent elsewhere by the German authorities. If but one could remain, perhaps it was better that this one were Bazaine; for I was thus able to get better acquainted with him and learn the real nature of his mind." Speaking at this time of him, the Emperor said one morning to an aide-de-camp: "The men of September the fourth will take their revenge on him some day; they will not forgive themselves for having called him: 'Our glorious Bazaine. In this world it is essential to succeed." And how true these words were a few months later.

On the subject of Leboeuf he said later: "It is impossible to cast any reproach on this minister of war or on his predecessors in office. In 1867, at

the time of the Luxembourg affair, Marshal Niel said: 'If Prussia insists on war, we shall be ready.' And preparations were then commenced in spite of every obstacle, and in the face of greatly diminished appropriations. Leboeuf cannot be held responsible for circumstances over which he had no control." This very just reflection should always be kept in mind in passing judgment on this much abused officer. He may not have been a military genius, but he was not a thoughtless failure.

Though the Emperor was never weary of praising Canrobert, at this time, calling him "the most glorious personage of my reign," he ever had a good word for Bazaine and repeatedly spoke of him in after years. Another memorandum on Wilhelmshöhe contains this paragraph about Bazaine: "This Marshal will be the one most attacked of all. His place is therefore near his sovereign. They will seek to dishonor him. Forgetting his faults, I must only remember all his misfortunes. I might say to him what Philippe II said to his admiral, the Duke of Medina-Sidonia, whose mistakes had cost Spain her most powerful fleet: 'I sent you forth against the English, not against fate and God's will.'"

Only those who saw the sad look which sometimes spread over the face of the Emperor Napoleon, whenever he walked through the park of Wilhelmshöhe with the former commander in chief of the last imperial army, could understand the unselfishness and perfect abnegation contained in these words. They offer another and almost tragic instance of the big-heartedness of Napoleon III. Even his bitterest enemies admit that he possessed this

quality to a high degree and it never came out better than in his treatment of the unfortunate Marshal Bazaine, who expiated not only his own faults—history will show that they cannot be called crimes, far from it—but the faults, and perhaps here in fact one might well say, the crimes, of others, of those who were often unworthy to buckle his shoes.

The Emperor enjoyed conversing with those whom he trusted, either about passing events, or about the persons playing an important part in the political world. Notes made when he was a prisoner at Wilhelmshöhe are the faithful record of some of these conversations. I shall make free use of these materials throughout this chapter.

Speaking of Bismarck he said:

"The chancellor's great strength lies in the fact that he is but a minister. What a difference there is between failure as a minister and being vanquished as a sovereign. The minister who has failed in his enterprises can retire, and watch with malicious pleasure the difficulties which his successor encounters in rebuilding the edifice left in such a bad state that it is almost ready to crumble to pieces. The sovereign on the contrary, though he may be more or less efficiently aided, is held responsible personally for all his errors. He must withdraw and leave the task to his successor. At least this is what happens in France.

"Owing to this fact, which springs from human nature itself, a sovereign will always be less venturesome, more farseeing, and more conscientious than the best minister, through interest if not through duty. If President Lincoln had been vanquished in the war, he would not have been reëlected but his

defeat would not have been a catastrophe to the United States. If Lincoln, unsuccessful in the Civil War, had been a king, his name would have been handed down to history as that of a man who had sacrificed half his country to an idea—generous though it were—and he, moreover, would in all probability have lost his throne. Before making a grave decision a sovereign—and that is one of the advantages of monarchical institutions—will consider more attentively than any minister the reasons for and against the proposed action. He knows that his immediate successor is his own son, a mere youth, or a near relation, it may be. A minister or even a president may see in his successor only a rival, a political adversary, perhaps a sworn enemy. In spite of all the teachings of religion and morals, man will ever remain man; he will love the blood of his blood and hate his enemy.

"Bismarck has been fortunate consequently, in being only a minister. Since his sovereign confides in him to an extraordinary degree, he can risk everything and has nothing to fear. If the war of 1866 had had fatal results for Prussia, the chancellor would have retired to his lands in Pomerania and there the matter would have ended, at least so far as he was concerned. Responsibility covered by royal approval, great political talent, almost unparalleled good luck—with those cards in his hands, Bismarck could dare do almost anything."

Then the Emperor spoke of the event of September 4, 1870, when a provisional republican government was set up in France in the place of the fallen Empire.

"What a godsend for Bismarck! Could he have

expected it? No, certainly, no one could have foreseen it. Who would have imagined that a nation once so chivalrous would seize the moment when its ruler was crushed by a heavy misfortune to seek revenge for imaginary woes? No, it was not the nation that acted then, it was not France that willingly smoothed away all the difficulties before which even Bismarck's good luck might have failed; it was the deed of only a few men, but what men they were!"

When one of those present asked the Emperor what would have been, in his opinion, the issue of that dreadful war if the events of September 4th had not brought about a change of government, he replied: "Peace would have been signed before the end of a month; and, if Bismarck had refused, all Europe would have united to oblige him to consent. Just what would have been the character of this peace, it is not so easy to say; but everything tends to make us believe that the conditions would have been better than those which are to be offered."

Then, continuing the general subject of the Chancellor and Germany, the Emperor said: "Bismarck has been lucky in everything he has undertaken. Only on the day of his first failure will the real character of this appear. What a strange nation the Germans are. What a complete change of opinion concerning the Chancellor, they show now that they have won a victory. Have they forgotten that four years ago Bismarck was the most hated man in Germany? You would not be believed if you said that now, and yet it would be easy to find proofs of this statement. This is the way matters went. The administrative talent of the Prussian minister of war, General von

Roon, and the strategical genius of Moltke commanding well disciplined soldiers, combined to win a battle. Then, suddenly, Bismarck awoke to find himself as much admired as he had been detested a few days before. He has done a very great deal for Germany; but it must be admitted that fate placed by his side aides who rendered it fairly easy to overcome all obstacles. He has the king's absolute confidence, and has had constant success in all his enterprises; so the German nation bends before his will as the reed before the wind."

Then the Emperor went on to speak of socialism: "This war will have as a result the development, at least ten years earlier, than was expected, of a question which cannot fail sooner or later, to gain an extreme amount of importance in our thickly peopled Europe. Bismarck has never troubled himself much about it, but he will be obliged to do so now. Up to the present I alone have thought of the workman. If I were again to mount the throne, his welfare would be the subject which would have the greatest interest for me, as the whole future depends upon it. You will eventually see what proportions the social question will grow to both in Germany and France."

Among the various writings of the Emperor is a study on the military organization of North Germany. One of his interlocutors said nothing when the Emperor showed him this book, and by this silence he seemed to imply that it would have been better to have studied the question before the war broke out. The Emperor guessed what was running in his friend's mind, so taking a copy of the *Moniteur* from the table, he read the entire passage

from M. Rouher's speech enumerating, with wonderful precision, the forces of Northern Germany, just as they turned out to be when the war got under way. He also read the speech in which M. Thiers, mocking and biting, denied every one of these statements, and accused M. Rouher of raising a phantom of 1,300,000 Germans in order to frighten the country. "You have convinced me," said the friend. "Well now you go forth and convince the nation, like a Paul," replied the Emperor earnestly.

It is easy to guess what New Year's day 1871 was for the imprisoned Emperor. The Empress also suffered cruelly, and, unable to return to Wilhelmshöhe, sent as her representative the Duc de Bassano who shared the exile of the Prince Imperial and the Empress, and who lived with them at Chislehurst. The Duc set out promptly to bear the New Year's messages to the Emperor from his wife and son. On that day of mourning, the customs and etiquette of the court were revived, at Wilhelmshöhe. The Duc de Bassano was introduced, during the morning, into the Emperor's presence with all those who shared his captivity, so that returning from mass, sad and depressed, the Emperor had a comforting surprise on finding all his companions in misfortune gathered to greet him with respectful expressions of good will. He often dwelt upon all these details, which have generally been overlooked in most of the accounts given of the life at Wilhelmshöhe during this dark period. When the Duc returned to England he gave the Empress a complete description of the Emperor's daily existence and brought her many tender messages.

A word should be devoted to the remarkable at-

tentions which the sovereigns of Europe showered on the dethroned Emperor at this moment. This had considerable political importance at the time, and explains to-day many incidents which then appeared obscure; for, it must be remembered, that at this moment war was still being waged in the French provinces and, what the outcome of the conflict would be, was not as yet perfectly sure.

Numerous telegrams reached Wilhelmshöhe on January 1, 1871. The first was from Prince Amadeo of Savoy, who had a few hours previously become King of Spain, having landed the preceding night at Alicante. He had the kind and gracious idea of sending his good wishes to his "father's former comrade in arms," whom fortune had so singularly deserted. This reference was of course to King Victor Emmanuel. But the full meaning of the telegram comes out when it is remembered that the frontiers of Spain and France touch, and the new king wished to be on friendly terms with the possible ruler of France restored to peace once more.

Similar telegrams reached Napoleon from Queen Victoria, the Emperor Alexander, King Victor Emmanuel, the King of Sweden, and Queen Isabella. Letters also came from Princess Mathilde, Prince Napoleon and all the members of the Bonaparte family, and from almost all the members of the old civil and military households of the fallen Emperor. In fact, before night settled down, all the reigning sovereigns of Europe, with the exception of the German princes, had sent their good wishes to the Emperor in prison. The Tours government knew this and must have had some uneasy forebodings.

King William sent Count von Monts, Governor of

Cassel, with the mission of expressing, in his master's name, the hope that "the year which was then coming might see the renewal between the two sovereigns of the friendly relations which had so long existed, so that a fresh period of peace and mutual good will might dissipate all remembrance of the events of the last few months." Count von Monts also brought a letter from Empress Augusta.

The Emperor returned his thanks. All this was most significant. The Emperor and the Empress both felt it. The Empress learned these facts several days after they occurred. But when the news came, she found that they had both arrived independently of one another, at the same conclusion.

The next day, and those following, thousands of letters came from France and proved very comforting to the Emperor, though they awakened false hopes, as events turned out. But they had their bearing on the rapidly developing crisis. Nor must we forget the great good they did to the physical and moral up-building of the depressed Emperor.

The Emperor and the Empress were both much touched by all this. But what caused the Emperor still more pleasure, and occasioned deep concern in certain quarters was a spontaneous manifestation on the part of the captive army. An address had been secretly circulated and more than 30,000 signatures thus collected told the Emperor that, in spite of disasters, in spite of calumny, the heart of the French soldier was attached to the name of Napoleon. It was understood that the number of these names would have been larger still if some of the prisoners had been willing to ask permission of the German authorities to sign the address, which was

made necessary by the stipulations of military law. Those who did sign asked no such authorization and this violation of the rules would have been severely punished if an order from the king had not been sent from Versailles, forbidding such punishment. Here, again, was a sign which might mean much.

Nor was this all. Piles of letters came from foreign countries, especially from England, and even from America, which showed the large place the Emperor still held in the world's heart. With these letters came two faded bunches of violets from besieged Paris which reached Wilhelmshöhe in fair condition. One bore the inscription: "From a true Frenchman," and the other "From a family of grateful working people." Another sign, some thought.

For a few days after all this, the Emperor seemed quite rejuvenated, so much had he been pleasantly moved by these manifestations. I am told that he worked with greater ardor than ever and his letters to the Empress were tinged with less sadness. But all was to end in disappointment, for no future New Year's day was to see him so near the throne he once filled with so much distinction.

The Emperor led a very regular and monotonous life at Wilhelmshöhe. He rose between seven and eight o'clock and after his ablutions, took a cup of tea, sitting at the open window for a while, no matter what the weather might be, though towards Christmas time there was frequently a temperature of 36 degrees Fahrenheit. This throwing wide open of the window was the signal for the coming of the half-famished sparrows who flocked to get their

daily pittance of crumbs. The Emperor, who shaved himself, often laid aside his razor to attend to the wants of the little winged beggars. He next busied himself with his private correspondence, and about ten o'clock received his mail and cast a rapid glance over the newspapers. He specially noticed the *Nord* and the *Echo du Parlement.* Among English papers he read the *Times,* the *Morning Post,* the *Daily Telegraph,* the *Pall Mall Gazette,* the *Standard,* and the *Daily News;* then came the *Epocha* of Madrid and the *Perseveranza* of Italy. But he attached the highest importance to the German papers, especially to the *Norddeutsche,* and to the *Gazettes* of Augsburg, of Silesia and the Weser. By the perusal of such varied sheets, he hoped to obtain an exact idea concerning the events of France. But this was no easy matter, owing to the innumerable contradictions and false reports which were published at that time both concerning him and his intentions and concerning what was going on in France, on the battle field and in home politics. Several of those who were in daily intercourse with him, the journalist Mels among others, also read the papers for him and gave him their opinion concerning current events. I am told that they frequently suggested that certain Austrian papers be passed over in silence, as they were often filled with coarse insulting articles about the fallen monarch.

At eleven o'clock the Emperor sat down to a very simple luncheon, during which those present would tell the news they had received from home or had read in the public prints. After the meal, Commandant Hepp, an Alsatian by birth, would translate for the Generals, military news from the Ger-

man papers, dwelling especially on the paragraphs which the Emperor had marked in red pencil. Then the Emperor chatted with his comrades in misfortune and all smoked together. From one to three, they walked in the park; and after the return to the castle, the Emperor worked in his study till it was time to prepare for dinner, which meal he always ate in evening dress.

The kitchen was somewhat plain, though Empress Augusta had been careful to send cooks of other than German nationality, to prepare the Emperor's meals. Among them was a certain Bernard, the author of a volume on the culinary art. The Emperor ate little and paid small attention to what was placed before him. This indifference greatly grieved poor Bernard who confided his sorrow to one of the members of the suite. The fact came finally to the Emperor's ears and on the following evening, he tasted every dish on the table, complimented the chef, and even asked for explanations concerning one dish. This is a good example of the Emperor's ever present wish to do little things that would please those in his service. The result was that servants of the imperial household always adored their master.

After dinner and conversation in the smoking room, the last post was sent off, when the Emperor often retired immediately to his rooms. But sometimes he remained an hour or two with the company and then would frequently seek to escape from the distressing thoughts of the day, by taking refuge in light literature. French friends exiled to Switzerland and Belgium were thoughtful enough to send interesting books to Wilhelmshöhe. One of

the aides-de-camp would occasionally read chosen passages from Corneille or Victor Hugo, from Racine or Lamartine, from Molière or Musset, while the Emperor, casting off for an instant the somber recollections which ever harassed him, would allow himself to be carried momentarily away by the sonorous rhythm and the beauty of the verses.

On other occasions a novel would be read. Comte Reille who had a charming voice, or General de Waubert, who was extremely witty, would be reader, and though the Emperor did not always listen very attentively, yet he occasionally interrupted the story to express his opinions concerning the characters or the sentiments they expressed. The Emperor was not over-fond of romance, though he did always enjoy a good historical tale.

Towards nine o'clock the Emperor would retire to his room, after having shaken hands with the Murat princes and all the officers, who in return bowed respectfully. He would then walk slowly upstairs to his study, open the windows a moment, if the weather permitted, and cast a melancholy glance at the soldiers and policemen guarding the castle. After that, he would sit down at his desk to read, make notes, and write letters or memorandums. Some of the last have been used in this chapter and elsewhere in these memoirs. These hours of solitude were among the pleasantest moments of the day and he made them last as long as he could in spite of the doctor's repeated objections. It was feared that this intellectual work at so late an hour would disturb the Emperor's sleep. So whenever the valet heard him move about the room, he would enter on one pretext or another. The Emperor

would then ask the hour, and as it was pretty sure to be at least one o'clock in the morning, if not later, the valet carrying a candelabra, was permitted to precede him to the bed-room.

All the expenses connected with the Emperor's stay at Wilhelmshöhe were borne by King William's civil list. Thus, at the request of Queen Augusta, the monarch put a stop to the clamors of certain German papers which gave it to be understood that the imperial prisoner's detention was costing the state too much. But Germany paid nothing and the King paid all. At least, so one was always given to understand.

From the beginning the Emperor reduced his household to as small limits as possible, and consequently a number of those attached to his person were sent back to France by way of Switzerland. Some of them, vexed and discontented at this forced dismissal, were ungrateful and insolent. When the Emperor was told of their bad conduct, he merely shrugged his shoulders and tried to make excuses for them. In the matter of horses, he retained only Phoebus, the Empress' horse which he had ridden at Sedan, and Hero, his war horse of the Italian campaign. The German queen sent him horses and carriages and saddle-horses; but he used them only on exceptional occasions. In fact, Napoleon III was not much of an equestrian. Though he rode well, he did not ride much. He was not over graceful on horseback, and his body was a little too short for this difficult but beautiful accomplishment.

Among the followers whom the Emperor had been forced to send away, two refused to go, and stayed at their own expense, at the Schombardt

Hotel. All were so much touched by their devotion, that the Emperor contrived to let them remain at Wilhelmshöhe. One of these was M. Zeller, veterinary to the imperial stables, whom the Emperor had known at Ham and the other was M. Gamble, first huntsman, an Englishman who had come to France in 1848 with Prince Louis. The Empress long held these excellent men in memory, both on the Emperor's account and because of their real personal worth.

A third member of the Emperor's former household who arrived shortly afterwards, certainly had his place by the side of the sovereign. I refer to Charles Thélin, treasurer of the privy purse, who for fifty years had never left the Emperor's service. He had been at the Tuileries on September 4th, but after the fall of the Empire, no one knew what had become of him. But it happened that when the Tuileries were invaded on that day, some people whom he had formerly succored in the Emperor's name recognized him, and protected him on his way to the station. As soon as he was able to cross the frontier, he hastened to the place where he knew he would find his sovereign. The Emperor was greatly delighted to see him and did not conceal his pleasure. Every one in the Emperor's suite shared this feeling and even the German officials showed themselves amiable towards the man whose devotion they could not but admire.

In connection with the coming of M. Thélin, the Cologne *Gazette* spread the idle tale that the Emperor possessed 80 million francs, and the *Indépendence Belge,* only too ready to credit any slur at the expense of the empire, increased the amount by

adding a cipher, thus making it 800 millions. It was easy to find out the true facts, however. Napoleon III had at his disposal 25 millions of the civil list and 5 millions representing the revenue of the crown dotation. Twenty-two millions of this sum were abandoned to the civil list management. Deducting further the pensions granted members of the imperial family, there remained 5 millions for the personal use of the Emperor, or, in the eighteen years that the Second Empire lasted, a sum of 90 millions. Seventy-two millions were given away by the Emperor during this same period. It would be easy to draw up an exact list of these pensions, gifts, and succor of all kinds which Charles Thélin dispensed in the Emperor's name. There remained, therefore, just eighteen millions, or one single million per annum; and the properties and funds which produced this revenue were sequestered for a long time. After the fall of the Empire, many years passed before the Empress could obtain, even in part, what belonged to her. While they lived in England, the greatest economy was necessary on the part of both the Emperor and the Empress, until at length the civil list accounts were liquidated by the French government. Much more might be said on this unpleasant topic of how the Government of the Third Republic treated the finances of the fallen imperial régime. But the subject was always distasteful to both the Emperor and the Empress. They were not avaricious. Even in the moments of their greatest prosperity, they thought little of saving anything for the day of disaster, which some of the pessimistic persons in their circle often predicted was sure to come. They used their for-

tune for the poor, for their faithful followers and often for art and science. Little or none went for idle pleasure or foolish show. I can say this proudly and honestly of them.

But to return to the current events of the Emperor's life at this time, which, though sad, are more agreeable than those just mentioned, towards the end of September, 1870, an event occurred at Wilhelmshöhe which was certainly strange and which might have had dramatic consequences if no interference had been forthcoming. It is related that an old lady, elegantly dressed, arrived one morning at Wilhelmshöhe, and went straight to the hotel. Having left a hand-bag in her room, she then walked to the castle and asked for a private audience with the Emperor. This mysterious visitor was received by General Reille who closely questioned her. She stated that she had been everywhere—to Metz, to Chalons, to Sedan—to seek an audience, but had always arrived too late. She insisted so strongly on seeing the Emperor that the aide-de-camp's suspicions were awakened. He therefore informed her that such an interview was impossible just then, the Emperor being unwell, but promised that she should hear from him again later. The lady appeared very much vexed at this refusal but left the castle without making any scene.

Returned to the hotel, the lady gave orders that she was not to be disturbed and shut herself in her room. Some hours later, she rang for the attendant. The man, who was busy elsewhere, did not answer for about a quarter of an hour, during which time she continued to ring violently. On the arrival of the waiter a dispute ensued. The lady spoke

harshly and the waiter retorted; whereupon the former got angry and gave him a vigorous box on the ear. Then followed a regular wrestling match. The waiter, although young, was getting the worst of it when he suddenly struck the lady's bonnet which went flying to the other end of the room. A wig remained attached to it disclosing a mass of white hair, surrounding a bald spot which looked very much like a tonsure. Now more than ever convinced that a person of such strength could not be a woman, the waiter shouted out at the top of his voice: "It is a man and a monk!"

Thereupon there was a great turmoil in the hotel. The police were called in, and an officer and two policemen searched the lady. "This is really a woman," said the officer; "but I am going to arrest her, for under her skirts we find a revolver and a dagger." So vigorously did she resist arrest that she had to be carried bodily to the police station. As they were leaving the room, the police officer happened to knock open the stove door with his sword, when a dense smoke immediately began to fill the apartment. Then it was perceived that the mysterious prisoner had been burning a mass of papers. The ashes were closely examined; but only one document still presented traces of writing. This it was possible to read, and from the words it was learnt that the burnt paper was a bond of some Roman company or other. The woman was taken to prison, shut in a secret cell and questioned. She related a number of unlikely tales, and pretended that she had destroyed more than 150,000 francs worth of Italian bonds. The police finally decided that she was crazy and as nothing serious could be

brought up against her, she was soon afterwards released. But as soon as she was free, she continued to hang about the castle, and was again arrested by detectives who were watching her movements.

The Berlin police authorities declared later that the number of the half burned bond was legible, so that it was exchanged for 500 francs, and that with the sum thus raised this strange person was sent back to France via Belgium. But little credit was given to this story, for it was known in the Emperor's surroundings that the woman had been sent to America. It has always been held that, in preventing her from entering the castle, General Reille saved the Emperor's life. However this may be, it put the officials on their guard and more care than ever was taken in protecting the Emperor. This same watchfulness, in fact, was kept up later during his sojourn in England. The Empress always felt that her husband ran a certain risk for, as he was a rallying point for all those who were dissatisfied with the existing régime in France, some republican fanatic might have thought he was doing a patriotic act in ending the days of the dethroned monarch. Some Bonapartists thought, by the way, that the Empress, too, should have been guarded more carefully while in England and during her travels, but she never considered this necessary, and I am happy to say she could always go about almost like a private person.

Every day, at Wilhelmshöhe, a crowd of Germans collected between the grand staircase of the large castle and the Schombardt hotel, in order to see the captive Emperor, concerning whom so many legends and inconceivable tales had been related. A cord

was drawn across the alley leading to the grand staircase, which meant that it was no thoroughfare. During the six months and more that this cord remained there, not once did anybody push it aside or go under it, notwithstanding the fact that on certain Sundays more than ten thousand persons crushed and shoved one another in order to catch sight of Napoleon III. Clement Duvernois, the brilliant journalist and politician of the Second Empire, who visited Wilhelmshöhe at this time, once said to me: "That cord taught me more about the German character than a library of books. Now I can understand Bismarck's power over such a nation."

The German police really carefully guarded the sovereign. The Emperor and aides-de-camp so informed the Empress on the occasion of her visit to Wilhelmshöhe, which greatly eased her mind during the long separation. The Empress was even given many details on this subject. Thus she learned that secret service men had orders to watch the public closely and to arrest any one who ventured to insult the captive monarch. Each policeman was provided with two pistols. The head of the force, a police lieutenant named Eiffert, was very polite, good-natured and of herculean strength. He had a peculiar way of glancing casually at the hedge in the neighborhood and often strange faces disappeared as by enchantment at a look from his eye. In a second, he would pick out those people in the crowd whom it would be well to keep in sight and if he saw any really objectionable character this individual was quickly got out of the way. One day a drunken peasant was singing a song which dated from 1813 and which was not very tender

to the memory of Napoleon I. On several previous occasions Lieutenant Eiffert had warned the man to discontinue this offensive act and ordered him to withdraw, but perceiving that on this particular day he was determined to approach the Emperor, the officer dealt him such a blow on the back of the neck that the fellow had to be carried to the hospital where he remained a fortnight.

One of the aides-de-camp thus described to me the ceremonies attending the Emperor's daily walk. When the time came for him to start out, the sentinels posted in front of the castle presented arms, the green-liveried footmen opened the glass front doors, the Emperor's comrades in captivity uncovered and he then appeared, attired in a black coat, dark trousers, a top hat and carrying a light cane in his hand. The generals bowed low as he descended the steps, while the Emperor raised his hat in acknowledgment and shook hands with Prince Murat. He would point with his cane in the direction in which he wished to walk, and, if it was towards the park-gates, the officer gave an order and the drums began to beat; German custom insisted on military honors being paid to a sovereign, even though captive. During the promenade, the Emperor used to convene with General Joachim Murat, Lieutenant Achille Murat, or with the aides-de-camp, and other officers who shared his captivity. Policemen walked in front, while Lieutenant Eiffert watched the procession.

These dull walks, along paths which were soon covered with snow, and where numerous spectators gathered to see the captives, were of a mournful and often even of a pathetic character. I am told that

people, known to be ill-disposed towards the sovereign, were more than once on these occasions overcome with strong emotion, the women often shedding tears. "The Emperor's impassive face and kind glance commanded respect and won sympathy," one of the aides wrote me. Bernard Scholtz, the German journalist, exclaimed when he saw Napoleon III passing: "There goes a true emperor!" In later years, the Emperor never liked to speak of this painful epoch, but when he did so, it was always with a kindly word for the German official world which had orders to treat him with every attention; for who could tell in those troubled moments what government would finally get the upper hand in France? Peace was not yet signed.

Many anecdotes are told about persons who desired to see the Emperor more closely. Most of these are false, though some few are true. The following belong to the latter category.

One day a German professor, accompanied by his wife and children, was heard to make the following remark:

"The man who is coming there held France, during eighteen years, subject to his fierce will. He was one of those dark-complexioned tyrants of the south."

"But he is fair, papa," interrupted one of the children.

"Who is fair?"

"Why, Napoleon."

"Impossible, all Corsicans are dark."

"I assure you, my dear," replied the professor's wife, "that he is fair and has blue eyes. I see him quite plainly."

"Impossible! And yet, you are right; he is indeed fair. How very peculiar!"

The professor and his argument were both upset by the Emperor's light hair. And this is what happened so often both inside and outside of France, during and after the fall of the Second Empire. Quidnucs at home and abroad were only too ready to malign the monarch and his work; but when he was seen near at hand, and his ideas and acts closely examined, then, as in the case of the German professor of Wilhelmshöhe, it was found that the Napoleon of real life differed entirely from the Napoleon falsely presented to the world by malignant enemies.

But let me continue the narration of this incident, for it is typical.

The Emperor, perceiving that he was being observed, bowed to the ladies with grave politeness, whereupon the professor's wife made such a deep curtsey that she tripped on her skirt and nearly fell. The professor bowed his bald head before "the tyrant" and the children imitated their parents.

When the Emperor had passed on, the conversation was continued as follows:

"If I were to live a hundred years," exclaimed the lady, "I could never forget that bow. How can you talk of tyrants? He has such a fine expression of the face and looks so sad."

"This," cried the sentimental professor, "is an historical moment in our lives. We must never forget it. All the same, I should like to know why the sovereign's appearance has been so misrepresented."

"All lies!" affirmed the wife energetically, and her very just words might be applied to innumerable

accusations brought against the Emperor and his régime.

Another day a group of workmen were discussing the Emperor. One of them had been several times to Paris, and had witnessed the misery and distress previous to 1851 and the prosperity, peace and security which reigned ten years later.

"Never in any country, at any time," he stated emphatically, "have the working classes been happier. And they owe it all to Napoleon. You look at me with surprise. Well, I was in Paris six years and I know what I am saying. Your stupid papers have turned your heads. People have always been freer and happier in Paris than in our country; always, I tell you."

These stories which were related to the Emperor by the police officer or an aide-de-camp, interested him considerably for he thus got acquainted with what was being said through the country concerning him, and in the evening he would refer to this in a spirit of indulgent and serene philosophy. The fact is there never lived a man who was less thin-skinned than Napoleon III, for the simple reason that his conscience was always clear. "He knew that he was trying to do good and that he generally succeeded," as a friend of mine once truly said.

A letter of one of the aides-de-camp contains this curious anecdote, which I give as it is typical of the time and place: "A bet was made the other day by three men,—a rich manufacturer of Suabia, a German nobleman, who was a naturalized citizen of the United States, and a prince belonging to a family reigning previous to 1866. These three gentlemen betted twelve bottles of champagne with some

Prussian officers, that they would not raise their hats or leave their seats when the Emperor passed. The bet was taken up and the French journalist Mels was chosen arbiter. One day, quite unconscious of all this, the Emperor was quietly walking in their presence. He seemed to have an intuition of what was going to happen, for I noticed that he carried his head high and his glance was clear and proud as though ready to defy an insult. In this mood he approached the spot where the three men were seated. Though they all wore a provokingly insolent look, the Emperor's calm pride disconcerted them, however, for they began to fidget, moved their feet about, and then passed their hands over their faces, as if to hide their visages. He was drawing nearer; was only ten paces away, now only five. Thereupon, they were seized with a sudden emotion. The American, as though moved by a spring, rose and instinctively raised his right hand to give the military salute; the German prince uncovered and held his hat in his hand; the manufacturer also bared his head and bowed profoundly. The Emperor returned their bow gravely and walked on. That evening the three men related this story which was so against themselves, and appeared as ashamed as schoolboys, not because they had bowed, but because they had made such a bet. They generously made amends for their questionable conduct by giving not only the twelve bottles of champagne that had been wagered, but by offering in addition several hundreds of marks, to the French prisoners or sick people at the Cassel hospital."

The Emperor himself used to sometimes relate this anecdote quietly, without comment, and the re-

cital always had something touching about it. Another episode also much impressed him, and he could never refer to it without deep emotion.

One day two Zouaves of the Guard suddenly appeared before the Emperor, during one of his promenades, at some little distance, at a turning in the path. They were asked what they were doing there and whence they came. Timidly at first, but growing a little bolder as they spoke, they stated that they had "got up a tale" for the military commander at Fritzler where they were imprisoned; they had made him believe they had sick relations at the Cassel hospital, and had thus obtained a twenty-four hours' leave. General Waubert questioned them further, when they appeared a little flustered and replied: "The truth is, we wanted to see the Emperor." In the meantime, the Emperor had reached the spot and asked them in a kindly tone: "Have you some favor to ask?"

"No, sire, we simply wished to see you," replied one of them; "we don't want anything. We wanted to see you; that's all."

"This was the first moment of real happiness I had tasted since my arrival at Wilhelmshöhe," the Emperor used to say. His eyes revealed the pleasure that this reply gave him, I was informed by one of those present. Very much moved, he shook hands with the Zouaves and thanked them for their interest in his welfare. The two soldiers thereupon lost control of themselves and began sobbing. Later, when they left Wilhelmshöhe, they went laden, by order of the Emperor, with provisions of all sorts; and as they would have to walk several leagues before reaching Fritzler, the naturalized American

referred to above sent them back in his carriage, in which another friend had stowed a good supply of ham and beer.

Immediately on his arrival at Cassel, the Emperor recalled the fact that in his early childhood, about 57 years previously, he had visited Wilhelmshöhe where his uncle, King Jerome of Westphalia, resided with Queen Catherine. Some of the names of the families in the neighborhood, as also those of several of his uncle's servants, had remained graven in his memory, and during the sad journey from the Belgian frontier to Cassel, he several times spoke with his nephew, Prince Achille Murat, on the subject of his former sojourn there. "It might be," he said, "that the Elector of Hesse has even left in the castle some souvenirs of the past." So, the day following his arrival, though worn with fatigue and emotion after the cruel hours just gone through, while everyone was anxious concerning his health which was known to be much shaken, the Emperor expressed a desire to visit the castle. He went through one room after the other, barely looking round, and apparently indifferent to all that was happening about him, when suddenly he found himself, without warning, in front of a large portrait full of beauty and youth and lighted up at that very moment by a sunbeam. Attracted by the costume worn by the figure in the portrait, he examined the picture more closely and gave vent to an exclamation of deep emotion, when he recognized his mother. He even fell back a step or two as a man would who is struck full in the chest. Those who were with him—Prince Achille Murat and the aides-de-camp, especially—were much affected. After a few seconds spent in gazing at

the picture the Emperor requested to be left alone.

A few hours later one of the witnesses of this moving scene wrote the Empress: "The Emperor remained a long time in front of the portrait of Queen Hortense. He asked counsel and comfort of the mother whom he had so loved. Vanquished by ill-fortune, he entered the room crushed, wearied, torn with anxiety concerning the fate of the Empress and the Prince Imperial, but he came out at the end of an hour, comforted, encouraged, resigned, calm and strong. One can guess what unexpected help had descended upon him from above. His soul had been strengthened by the presence of Queen Hortense. Death had come to the support of life. Henceforth the memory of his mother, and his affection for the Empress and the Prince Imperial, will, we feel sure, sustain him. Several times hourly he asks us when we think he will know something sure concerning their fate."

At this moment, the Empress' visit, described at the beginning of this chapter had not taken place. At first he knew about her only what had been related, more or less imperfectly, in the newspapers. He longed to hear from her own lips how she had borne the shock of the terrible crisis through which she had passed; what had happened to her since the fourth of September. Direct news from the Empress and the Prince Imperial was slow in reaching him, I learned later. Several times she wrote but the letters did not reach him, as the Empress sent them under cover to an officer who had left Cassel. It was only on September 17th, after fifteen days of cruel waiting that these letters were handed to the Emperor who, comforted for a while, immediately

replied: "I experienced a sweet consolation in receiving last evening and this morning your letters of September 3rd, 14th and 15th. The tender expressions contained in them did me much good, for I was terribly worried by your silence. Certainly the misfortune which has stricken us is very great, and it is aggravated by the state in which France is left, a prey to invasion and anarchy. I agree with you that it is best to do nothing for the moment except to endeavor to refute the calumnies which are heaped upon us."

Henceforth Eugénie's letters arrived regularly, pouring balm into the wounded heart of the Emperor. "What comfort can I find in life," he wrote on the 29th, "if it be not in your affection and in that of our son? I hear that you were ill when you reached England; are you well now? Everybody praises your courage, and your fortitude under such adverse circumstances. I am not surprised."

Perhaps I may be excused for giving these extracts of so tender a nature; but the tenor of some of the letters which passed at this time between Napoleon and Eugénie, exiled and widely separated as they were, was often not all that they would have liked it to be. Neither of them was certain that the missive would reach destination. It could not, of course, be intrusted to the ordinary mails, but was committed to some faithful friend or servant. Dr. Evans, the American dentist, was the medium of communication on one or two occasions, his relations with the German court rendering this easy. The uncertainty about the delivery of the letters made both correspondents hesitate over what should be put in them. More than one tender message,

harmless bit of news, or mild comment on the past was frequently at the tip of the pen and was sorrowfully thrust aside at the mere thought that it might be read by other eyes than those for which it was intended. Great care had to be taken also not to touch on political or diplomatic questions, which if divulged might damage the prospects of a possible future restoration of the imperial family, or might weaken the supreme efforts which France was making in besieged Paris or in the war-ridden French provinces to beat back the foreign foe. In a word, neither the Empress nor the Emperor to the very end of his life ever recalled this correspondence without a shudder. Hence it is that I have ventured to give here one or two passages which really came from the heart. Even the constant dread of violations of secrecy could not always check the expression of their affections.

One of the circumstances of his life at Cassel which the captive Emperor felt most keenly, was the spying to which he was subjected. He did not complain of it, however, as it was, perhaps unavoidable. But he disliked it very much. He knew that one of the officials attached to the bookkeeping department of the castle managed to obtain a copy of all the telegrams he sent or received and that, moreover, this person had assumed the duty of examining all his letters and of allowing them to be delivered only after such examination, while some were never delivered at all. The Emperor often wondered whether this mission had been officially assigned to this gentleman or whether he had simply taken these duties upon himself of his own accord. However this may be, the facts in the case were as just given.

One day the Emperor was not a little surprised at a communication received from the journalist Mels. The latter had received a letter from the German headquarters at Versailles, which was signed "An officer." The author of this letter said he was requested—the word was underlined three times—to ask Mels to warn the Emperor that the walls of Wilhelmshöhe had ears, and that all conversation during meals was reported and reached headquarters with incredible celerity. The officer's incognito was easy to unravel, for Mels knew the handwriting. He quickly guessed who had told the secretary to write this letter. In fact, this person was none other than the Crown Prince of Prussia, afterwards the Emperor Frederick. The Prince had on several occasions shown his respect for the Emperor and severely reprimanded officers of his staff who had spoken disparagingly of the vanquished sovereign.

The Emperor received the communication with a simple shrug of the shoulders. He became more guarded, however, in his utterances, and when he had important messages for the Empress or some one of his political confidants, he intrusted his dispatches to persons who came to visit him at Wilhelmshöhe, or sent them direct to England by sure friends. This was a great disappointment for the above-mentioned official, whose activity was thus checked. It was learned later that it had been his daily custom to search the desks of the aides-de-camp, and other officers, as well as that of M. Pietri, private secretary of the Emperor, he who afterwards so faithfully filled the same office in Eugénie's household.

This spy system continued all the time the Emperor remained captive. During the latter part of

that period this official specially attacked M. Pietri, though the latter did not let it be seen that he noticed it. The Emperor continued to shrug his shoulders, but was cautious in his correspondence with the Empress or with his friends of Brussels and Switzerland, and the table-talk was most reserved. Sometimes even certain things were said for the very purpose of having them reported and more than one bit of information carried to Versailles must have puzzled German headquarters. On several occasions, a hearty and significant laugh would follow some remark made by an officer or by the Emperor himself which was intended for Teutonic consumption. Now and then, in after years, the Emperor referred to these "indiscretions," and at times he would find amusement in repeating some of them. Towards the end, even the obtuse Wilhelmshöhe spy saw that he was being played with and then he felt rather nervous concerning the way he was looked upon in high official circles, for who could sift the truth from the jokes in all the communications he had been so industriously sending on to Versailles. The person in question was naturally held in very little esteem by the Prussian officers at Wilhelmshöhe. One day, as this individual was leaving the mess-hall of the Hotel Schombardt, Major von Spangenburg, of the artillery, called out to the waiter so that "the spy" could hear him: "Open the window and dust the place where that man was sitting."

The Emperor, as has already been said, worked late every evening on political and other studies, and, during his captivity, even wrote several pamphlets. One of these was entitled "Causes of the Capitulation of Sedan," and another, which he re-

quested the Marquis de Gricourt to sign and which was published in Brussels, attracted much attention. It was even said in Germany that this pamphlet was the cause of rather warm discussions between the king of Prussia and his Chancellor. King William up to then had only heard Bismarck's version of various state matters, and was now somewhat astonished by certain novel aspects of old questions which were presented in this pamphlet differently from the way the Chancellor had presented them.

The king was specially struck by a particular letter given in this pamphlet. In spite of the opposition of England and Austria, the Emperor, this pamphlet showed, had obtained the admission of Prussia, to the Congress of Paris in 1856. On that occasion King Frederick Wilhelm IV wrote to Napoleon III: "Prussia and the house of Hohenzollern will never forget what your Majesty has done for them." King William now read these words for the first time, though Bismarck must always have known of their existence.

How often that sentence and also the gallant speeches of the king when he came to Compiègne and to Paris came back to Eugénie's mind! Did not Prussia coax and cajole the Empire until the day came when, feeling herself the stronger of the two, she stretched out her arms—not to kiss, as in the fairy-tale, but the better to strangle? Such was the view the Empress always held and the Emperor shared this opinion before he died. They spoke together more than once on this subject, whenever the Wilhelmshöhe period and this pamphlet became the topic of conversation.

Bismarck complained strongly of this pamphlet,

and endeavored to influence the king in the matter. But William did not appear to attach so much importance to the publication as did his minister and gave orders that the Emperor should not be molested in what freedom he still enjoyed. The negotiations for peace, which, at this moment were under way with the Emperor, were not, I may add, disturbed by this incident. Here, as in many other cases which came under direct notice both before, during and after the war of 1870, King William showed himself more of a diplomat and surely more of a real gentleman than did his celebrated but rather unscrupulous chancellor.

A truncated version has been published in Germany of a correspondence exchanged between the Emperor Napoleon III and Comtesse of Mercy-Argenteau, at the time of the peace negotiations following the war of 1870 and while the former was at Cassel. The Countess was a Caraman-Chimay, whose husband has been an Austrian subject till 1869, when, as he always resided in Paris, he became a French subject. His wife had been much remarked at the Tuileries for her beauty and charm of manner. During the war, the Comte and Comtesse offered their services to the Emperor and the Empress and the former sent the Comtesse several letters of a political bearing from which the following extracts are made.

A letter dated February 4, 1871, runs as follows: "You put certain questions and ask for my opinion on various points, in the hope of being able to aid us at this juncture. You are very kind to make such offers. Well—the present condition of France is most lamentable, and I do not see where salvation

is to come, if the Emperor does not come forward in that spirit of chivalry which all are ready to recognize in him. It is true that we are now entirely beaten. But Germany's interests are our interests. The reëstablishment of order, the restraining of revolutionary aspirations, the encouragement of national prosperity which can alone permit us to defray the cost of the war and ensure a solid peace,—these things at this moment concern Germany as much as they do France. Unfortunately the convocation of the national assembly renders very difficult the accomplishment of these things; for if that body concludes a peace, it will be incapable of establishing a government which can carry out the stipulations of the peace, and if this is not done, the country will, forcibly, soon fall a prey to new internal convulsions. If I were in the place of the Emperor and King, and if the Assembly should patch up a peace, I should insist on the people being consulted in the matter, so that a government would be established which should be sufficiently strong to carry out the clauses of the agreement. But if the assembly should refuse to treat on these conditions, I should then declare my intention of treating only with the legitimate government and would propose to that government a peace on better terms than those offered to the Assembly, and based on an alliance drawn up in an equitable fashion with a due regard for the best interests of the two nations. What would be the conditions of such a treaty and such an alliance? It will not be difficult to arrange this in so far as our side is concerned, and it cannot be any more difficult on the other side, for Emperor William is now the arbiter of Europe. I believe that all these

considerations have already been laid before Count Bismarck and a man of his parts must have grasped the full meaning of them. But circumstances often disarrange the best laid plans and even great statesmen are sometimes forced to bend beneath the petty yoke of necessity. There is but one thing lacking to complete the victory won by the Emperor and King, and that is to conclude a noble peace, a peace that will not leave behind it ruin, despair and anarchy, but, on the contrary, will force all men to recognize the grandeur of the Emperor's character and the depth and wisdom of his political conceptions."

Two days later, in another letter, the Emperor asked the Comtesse to act the part of the dove and bear a message of peace to the German authorities. So Mme. de Mercy-Argenteau went to Wilhelmshöhe under an assumed name and had an interview with the Emperor, whose verbal instructions she received, at the same time as an autograph letter which was to be handed to Emperor William. She then saw Count Bismarck who arranged an audience for her with the German sovereign. But her efforts were not successful. Bismarck was to obtain in another quarter a peace whose onerous character for poor France he had had no good ground to hope for. But Mme. de Mercy-Argenteau was still sanguine, and requested the Emperor to write to Bismarck. But this he refused in a letter which ran as follows:

"I think such a letter would be useless. In the first place I have directed Baron de Farincourt to do it. In the second place, things look very black for me in France. My friends have to combat the efforts of the Orleans princes, who have many supporters

in the middle classes; and I see that the nation cannot forgive me for having been so badly served and so unlucky."

Peace was about to be concluded, when the following letter, written at Wilhelmshöhe on March 2, 1871, was sent:

"How can one help being discouraged in the presence of such peace conditions as are offered France? I am of course ready to admit that we have been beaten and consequently that we are obliged to defray the cost of the war or to abandon a portion of our territory, but to condemn us to both sacrifices simultaneously, that seems to me too much. What government can maintain its authority with such a material and moral load on its shoulders? In such form, it is not a peace which the Emperor of Germany offers us. He is simply threatening our very existence, and instead of reëstablishing peace, is sowing hatred and mistrust for the future. Is this course wise, even for Germany herself? I do not think so. The state of civilization to which Europe has now attained is such that nations are bound together by a number of mutual interests, so that the harm or ruin of one nation reacts on all the others. The progress of France checked for a number of years 38 millions of souls given over to anarchy, a whole nation's heart filled with a wish for revenge and thus an ever-smarting wound festering on the social body of the French people,—this is what such a peace really means. If the Emperor of Germany and Count Bismarck had carefully considered the situation of Europe; if, instead of being dazzled by the extraordinary success which they have obtained, they had really wished to put a period

to the era of revolutions and wars, they would not have acted in this wise. They would have declared that there was in France no stable government and consequently no legitimate government; that so long as this condition of things continued, they would regard the suspension of hostilities only as a truce and would take measures to be in a still more favorable military position if the struggle should recommence; but that, so soon as France should have a government which was accepted by the whole nation and based on right and equity, they would care more for future peace than the possession of some dissatisfied departments torn away by force from a deeply wounded nation. Such a course would have been a noble policy. Hatred of Germany would have disappeared as if by enchantment, peace between the two countries would have been assured for many years to come, commercial confidence would have revived, trade would have immediately regained its former vigor and the Emperor of Germany would have won greater glory than that which he will gain through the forcible possession of Metz and Strasburg. I write to you, my dear Countess, as though you were the minister of foreign affairs. But I find much comfort, in the midst of the general anxiety which surrounds me, in speaking thus freely with you."

A few days later, the Emperor again wrote to the Comtesse to thank her for all she had done in the cause of peace, and the correspondence was carried for some little time longer, but the copies of these letters are not in my possession, and the orignals, as published in Germany do not possess. it seems to me, the interest of those given above.

CHAPTER XV

THE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS OF 1870

During the autumn of 1870, Count Bismarck evidently did not consider the government of national defense a regular official body, and his plan appeared to be to enter into negotiations with the Regency in England, that is, with the Empress, and perhaps even with the Emperor himself. On September 11th, a note was published in a paper of Reims, which town was then held by the Germans, stating that, from the diplomatic point of view, the imperial government alone existed, that Prussia could treat with Napoleon III, with the Regency or even with Marshal Bazaine, but that it would be impossible to treat with a group which represented only a fraction of the Opposition of the former Legislative Body. This note, evidently inspired by Bismarck, was much commented on in foreign circles at the time, and should be kept in mind by those who would understand the rather obscure plans and counter-plans that were put forward and withdrawn at this complex juncture. In after years, the Emperor often went over with the Empress all the details of these negotiations, and while some things were not clear to them they had a precise opinion of the affair as a whole, and this view may now be given.

The Emperor was a prisoner, the French armies defeated, the empire's prestige wrecked, and the

acts of the "Fourth of September" had destroyed any remnants of moral influence which the country might still possess. What indeed, could be the feelings of the other powers for a government which had sprung up as though by chance, rising out of civil strife, and now standing face to face with the enemy? All previous revolutions in France had shaken the whole of Europe, and it might be feared that a similar result would now be experienced. It was not forgotten how, in 1830, Belgium and Poland rose to arms and how, in 1848, the most firmly established thrones were shaken, and formidable insurrections broke out in Italy, while Prussia was greatly agitated.

Not alone rulers, but the nations themselves, were severe in their judgments concerning an insurrection which had been fomented by unworthy Frenchmen, which was an attempt on the part of the Paris deputies, in connivance with General Trochu, who wilfully forgot his promises and shirked his duties, to overturn the Empire. The revolution of September 4, 1870, was therefore, rightly considered, to be merely an insurrectionary victory secured under reprehensible conditions and fraught with danger to other nations whose people might be tempted to regard it as an example to be followed. In Hungary and in Italy where the patriotic ideal was strong, the French revolutionary party was roundly blamed for having so completely forgotten all the demands of patriotism by setting up the Third Republic.

In September, 1870, Europe was at first surprised that a great nation, instead of preserving its presence of mind when confronted by sudden catastro-

phies, should have thought only of overthrowing the reigning dynasty. The war had, of course, been disastrous. How could it have been otherwise, brought about as it was by Bismarck, the forger of dispatches, the organizer of underhand schemes and of snares into which the government of the Emperor inevitably fell? Was no account to be taken of the misfortune of the French armies, and of the incapacity of some of their generals, and all the blame for the national disaster to be cast on the sovereign who was ill, more ill than was then known? Had not the Emperor made every possible effort to bring about an *in extremis* arrangement? Had he not sought to counter-balance Prussia's influence by alliance with Austria and Italy? "If I failed to accomplish this great object," he once remarked very charitably, "the fault was not all on my side."

Austria was at that time prevented from giving any real assistance, owing to the extreme difficulty of mobilizing her forces on such short notice and because of her fear of Russia, where preparations were being made to join the campaign. In fact, the French ambassador at St. Petersburg, General Fleury, had the greatest trouble to persuade Russia to abandon a position of open hostility and to agree to observe strict neutrality, in the contest about to begin. And after the fall of the Empire, Austria had no longer any interest in forming an alliance with France. It behooved her, on the contrary, to make every effort to maintain friendly relations with Prussia.

As for Italy, in spite of the deep gratitude which should have moved that nation to join forces with France, the attraction in the direction of Rome

proved too strong, and the Italians were unable to think of any other pursuit than the possession of the holy city. Victor Emmanuel was, probably, inclined to help France. In fact he even agreed to do so, when Prince Napoleon was sent to him from Chalons by the Emperor, in August, 1870, at the moment when disaster began to overtake the French cause. But the assistance of Italy was granted only on condition that France should allow her to act as she chose regarding Rome, a condition, however, which the Emperor mindful of his promise to protect the Holy Father, was unable to accept. By loyal adherence to a promise made, the Emperor deprived himself of the future help of Italy. Victor Emmanuel, after the fall of the Empire, was freed from any remorse he might feel in not having supported the generous ally who had contributed in so large a measure to the establishment of Italian unity. Though Victor Emmanuel still entertained feelings of friendship for Napoleon III he was in no wise under obligations to the new republican government which had been set up in Paris, in regard to which there could be no longer any question of remorse, but, on the contrary, a feeling of relief at being liberated from a disagreeable obligation, and of pleasure on seeing the greater facilities thus unexpectedly offered for his unopposed entrance into Rome.

On the other hand, Russia, from the point of view of her interests in Europe, must have been disappointed on seeing events take such an unexpected turn. Her affection for Prussia was barely more than simulated, though she did not at once perceive the unquestioned disadvantage of the rapid growth

of a power which had formerly occupied a secondary rank. Nor can it be certain that, viewed from the standpoint of monarchies which sometimes consider themselves solidary one with the other, Russia ever wept over the fall of a dynasty which she considered too new and perhaps ephemeral. In spite of the official effusions at the Paris exhibition of 1867, and the famous review in the presence of the three Emperors, one of whom only reached the imperial crown through the downfall of the other, the Czar Alexander II seemed to only half understand what might be the result to Europe of that terrible catastrophe. He only saw that considerable advantages would accure to his country from the abolition of the unfavorable clauses of the treaty of 1856 concerning navigation in the Black Sea, and above all he remembered the intervention of France in the Polish insurrection of 1863. He had still less sympathy for the uncertain form of government which was to represent France henceforth; men like Jules Favre and Floquet were, in his eyes, only enemies and he had no wish to enter into relations with them or their fellows. Obeying a sentiment of humanity, Alexander had told General Fleury that when the time came he would speak out in favor of France. Events had followed upon one another in such rapid succession that he had not had time to do so though, later, at the Empress' request, he did do so.

The new French minister of foreign affairs, Jules Favre, knew nothing whatever about the diplomatic negotiations which were under way at the moment of the fall of the Empire. He had, moreover, to face a situation which was suddenly entirely altered. Those who, some days previously, had been looked

upon as eventual allies, no longer considered themselves bound by agreements made with the imperial government, now that that government had ceased to exist. The Prince de la Tour d'Auvergne, the last minister of foreign affairs of the Second Empire, did not consider himself under any obligation to reveal to his successor, brought into office through an insurrection, the true state of affairs existing between the imperial cabinet and foreign powers. But if Jules Favre had been better acquainted with diplomatic matters, he would have guessed much that was going on by the correspondence which reached his department from the French agents abroad. He was unequal to this, and, in addition, had not the tact to gather information from those at hand who might have helped him. So he remained in ignorance of the negotiations entered into by the Empire. Even had he known of them, he would no doubt have been much embarrassed to make any use of the knowledge; for how could this government of national defense, as it was called, which sought above all things to cast discredit on the imperial system which had been overthrown by defeat and insurrection,—how could such a government continue the diplomatic work of the Empire? To do so would have been the rehabilitation of the imperial government and admission of the harm caused to France by its overthrow. If, on the other hand, the foreign powers took advantage of the ignorance shown by Jules Favre, one cannot be surprised at this, for they thereby merely exercised their indubitable rights.

Thus, France was completely isolated in the autumn of 1870. No one thought of stretching out

a helping hand to the conquered. The great powers were selfishly silent; some because they considered themselves fortunate to get out of an awkward position without harm, and without being obliged to interfere; others because their influence was nil; and England, lastly, because, though well disposed towards the sovereign, had nevertheless believed in the sincerity of Germany, and in French provocation, and considered herself completely freed from all obligations, in view of the setting up of a new government at Paris. Moreover, the sympathies of the English cabinet were all for Prussia. This was no secret.

Under these circumstances, when the Empress had withdrawn to Hastings with several ministers and faithful followers, she determined to raise her voice, but not to make pacific overtures, which, as I have said, she did not consider herself entitled to attempt. The Empress wrote a letter to Emperor Alexander begging him not to abandon, in the presence of the republican government, the policy which Russia had adopted towards the Empire.

After alternative periods of distrust and of kindly feelings towards the imperial government, Russia in consideration of the guarantees demanded of Austria and obtained from that nation, determined, on the outbreak of the war, to maintain a strict neutrality, which, considering the ties of friendship and relationship which united the reigning families of Prussia and of Russia showed considerable good will for France. The Empress now appealed to this spirit of amity. "If I have correctly interpreted the reports addressed to us by our ambassador," she wrote on September 15, 1870, "your Majesty would

not entertain for a moment the idea of the dismemberment of France. Fate had been against us. The Emperor is imprisoned and calumniated. Another government has undertaken the task we had considered it our duty to perform. I now come to beg your Majesty to use every influence in your power that an honorable and durable peace may be concluded when the proper time comes. May France, whatever be its form of government, always find in your Majesty the friendliness which was so warmly shown to us during these times of bitter trial." The Empress' letter was misrepresented at the time and has often been misrepresented since; but the foregoing is the exact text of the essential part of the missive.

In fact, Alexander had made every effort during the last days of August to act on the lines suggested by the Empress a fortnight later. At General Fleury's pressing request he wrote to King William, pointing out that if France were finally vanquished, peace, based on humiliating conditions, could only be a mere truce which would endanger the peace of all the states of Europe. The king made no definite answer, but dwelt on the great difficulty he foresaw in obtaining Germany's consent to abandon the idea of demanding a portion of the conquered provinces. It was on August 29th, that the Czar told the French ambassador of his attempt to conciliate William, and he seized the occasion to further inform General Fleury that "he would not fail, when the time came, to speak boldly, if it were necessary."

This action on the part of Russia was taken at a time when the military disasters of France threatened to bring about the fall of the dynasty, but

before the final act of the tragedy. General European interests demanded that the Empire should remain standing, by means of an honorable peace. But the disaster at Sedan, and its consequence—the insurrection of September 4th, at Paris—completely modified the situation in France. All Europe was menaced by these events, and what would be the Czar's course under the changed circumstances became uncertain. Would he modify the friendly feelings he had begun to show? But, notwithstanding his dislike for the new government and his partiality for his uncle, he hearkened in a certain measure to the voice of the regency, begging him to continue to maintain towards France, whatever her form of government might be, those kindly sentiments which he had shown to the dynasty in its prosperity, now that it was so sorely tried, and use every influence in his power, when the time came, to obtain an honorable and durable peace.

The Empress' letter, given above, arrived in St. Petersburg on September 17th, under cover, to General Fleury. Although the latter no longer held an official position, he immediately obtained an audience from the Czar, handed him the message and warmly advocated Russia's intervention. He sent a report of this interview and accompanied it with these reflections, here published for the first time: "I now found that Alexander's intentions had greatly altered, since the last time I spoke with him on the subject. If the Regent patriotically effaced herself in the presence of the new Government, it was well know that the latter was, in the eyes of the European chancelleries, a mere insurrectionary body. Far from seeking to obtain in the diplomatic

world a more regularly defined position, M. Jules Favre accentuated in all his political dispatches and in the interviews he had with diplomats, the revolutionary character of his government, by heaping insults and calumnies on the fallen system. He began by condemning the Empire and extolling the last revolution. His republican rhetorical metaphors were of a nature to frighten the foreign offices. The latter were still on the best of terms with the fallen government; they had all shown the Emperor profuse marks of official deference; it was irritating, almost insulting, therefore, to talk to them of the defects of the imperial government."

In this connection the Emperor said one day: "It is a peculiar method, often practiced in France, alas, that of throwing mud at the preceding government in order to enhance the merits of the existing system. These despicable methods were employed in 1830, when the younger branch of Bourbons allowed the elder to be condemned and insulted." No wonder then that an insurrectionary government employed similar means to cast discredit on its predecessor. "But to use such unworthy arms when dealing with strangers," the Emperor went on, "and at a moment when their help might be needed, was surely a still worse procedure. To insult the past, in the presence of third parties who were interested in our fall, was to bring discredit on themselves and show a meanness of character which could not fail to astonish foreign powers." Moreover, a dethronement pronounced by the inhabitants of the French metropolis "in the name of Law, Justice, and Public Safety," could not but ruffle reigning dynasties whose power was defied and contested in their states by parties

similar to those which had been so suddenly brought to power in France by this last convulsion in Paris.

Under these circumstances, Alexander II was not inclined to look with favor on the temporary government set up in Paris and he declared that he preferred that France should seek by herself the best peace terms possible. At the same time, the Empress learned that he had been "much touched and impressed" by her appeal. Before replying, he authorized the chancellor of the empire to enter into negotiations with the former French embassador and to examine with him the basis on which an intervention might be permissible. The Czar then wrote the Empress as follows:

"I have received the letter you were good enough to send me. I understand and appreciate the feeling which dictated it and which leads you to forget your own sorrows and to remember only those of your country. I take a sincere interest in the matter and ardently desire that peace may be promptly secured and an end thus put to those sorrows, as also to the evils which result for the whole of Europe from the present state of things. I think that this peace will be strong in proportion to its equity and moderation. I have done, and shall continue to do, all that may depend on me to contribute to a result which I ardently desire. I thank you for your kind remembrance and your confidence in my good intentions, and again assure you of my friendship."

In the meanwhile, the ambassador was making every effort to modify the unfavorable sentiments of the Czar and Russian chancellor towards the government of September 4th. At his request, the cabinet of St. Petersburg promised to advise the

Prussian government to enter into negotiations with the minister for foreign affairs. In compliance with pressing telegrams, an interview was granted, and on September 19, 1870, M. Jules Favre was received at Ferrières Castle, belonging to Baron de Rothschild, where the Prussian headquarters then were.

Full of mistaken fancies, the minister imagined that Prussia would not continue the war against "a free nation" and that the proclamation of the republican form of government would be sufficient to satisfy King William. He repeated to Bismarck the strange remarks and fancies which had characterized the last manifesto of the Paris Government. But the German Chancellor, who had fancies of his own, as was seen later on, was surprised by those of his interlocutor. At first, Bismarck refused to talk of the possibility of an armistice, or of a peace negotiated with the government of National Defense, and avoided direct queries or made evasive answers. Finally, however, he said: "Strasbourg is a constant menace against us. It is the key of our house and we must have it." Jules Favre asked if Alsace and Lorraine were to be brought into the discussion, and the Chancellor answered promptly, "I have nothing to say about Lorraine, but as regards Alsace, my mind is made up."

Commenting at a later period on this interview, Emperor Napoleon said: "At bottom, Bismarck did not wish to enter into negotiations at that time with the delegate of the temporary government. He had suffered it to be given out by the *Indépendant Rémois* that the imperial government was the only one with which he could properly negotiate. He shrewdly held in reserve Jules Favre, in case other negotia-

tions should not succeed. In reality, he was in no hurry to conclude peace or even to grant an armistice because, at that juncture, he hoped, by new delays, to obtain better terms. He was well aware of the disorganized state of France, and knew he had everything to gain by waiting. In a word, Bismarck cleverly played with his adversaries, as a cat plays with a mouse, in order to scratch the harder when the time came." All the facts that have since come to light confirm the view then taken by Napoleon III, and show once more how clearly he saw into the complex political situations.

On the very day when Bismarck met Jules Favre, for the first time, he granted an audience to Regnier, that famous, perhaps infamous would be a more exact typification, adventurer who will be mentioned more at length further on in these pages.

On the following day, having given Regnier a passport for Metz, Bismarck continued his conference with Jules Favre. Having consulted the king, the chancellor appeared to have softened a little. He now consented to discuss the matter of an armistice, but demanded that Strasbourg and Toul be given in exchange for the proposed suspension of arms. Jules Favre naturally resisted this extravagant condition and repeated his famous declaration: "Not an inch of ground, not a stone of our fortresses," and refused to yield the towns which had done their duty so nobly. He asked to be allowed to revictual Paris. But this the Chancellor declared to be impossible unless the Prussian troops were permitted to occupy Mont Valérien, the powerful fort on the high hill west of Paris. But, of course, this was out of the question. Suddenly Bismarck feigned to yield.

But did he really desire peace at that moment? Napoleon III never thought so, and the rest of his immediate circle who knew so well the inside history of these negotiations, always shared this same view. Was he not in reality trying to gain time, while sounding the ground at Metz? So it was believed. At the very moment when the conference seemed on the point of failing, the Chancellor appeared willing to facilitate some agreement by uniting the question of a treaty of peace to make peace "in consideration of the cession of Strasbourg and its suburbs."

The Emperor Napoleon said on this point: "Bismarck asked a great deal, no doubt, but what was it in comparison to the exorbitant pretentions which grew as the war continued? On November 1st the demands had increased, and he claimed the cession of Alsace and an indemnity of three hundred millions francs; then, after the taking of Paris, the cession of Alsace and Lorraine, and an indemnity of five thousand millions." If the Empress refused, when these first conditions were laid before her, to agree to them, it was because she felt that she had no right, being in exile, to negotiate. Representing as Eugénie did the fallen dynasty, she hesitated to approve any cessions of territory, because if the dynasty were reëstablished by the force of events, such an act might be later thrown in her face as a crime. The Emperor at Wilhelmshöhe felt the same scruples and abandoned negotiations which could only be accomplished by such painful cessions. But on the part of a government which might easily have thrown the blame on the fallen Emperor, one is surprised at such exaggerated scruples. By their unwillingness to agree to acceptable terms, the men

of September 4th forced France into a continuation of a disastrous war, the final result of which could not be doubted.

In the second phase of the conflict of 1870-71,—"the war in the Provinces"—it is true that heroic deeds were accomplished and small individual triumphs obtained, but the wound grew deeper, more difficult to heal, and the conditions of peace became outrageously onerous and cruel. The country tired and worn-out, was brought to such a pass that it finally accepted, without a murmur, the relentless clauses of the treaty of Frankfort. Would not the nation have accepted, if not willingly at least peaceably, the much more moderate conditions named at Ferrières? The men of September 4th thought themselves strong and invulnerable because they were republicans. They did not wish to accept the same conditions as those offered to the Empress. The Emperor well said: "They thought, poor men, that because of the new form of government, they presented themselves under new conditions, which would be taken into account; and, yet it was because of this very republic that the enemies' confidence was lessened. In a word, in the eyes of Bismarck the instability of the French government during the winter of 1870-71 rendered all guarantees uncertain unless they were of a material nature; unless they took the form of cessions of territory." Nobody to-day would question the correctness of the dead Emperor's reasoning.

What has been called "the Regnier incident" occurred immediately after the publication of the note in Reims newspapers above referred to. It is very complicated in many particulars. A certain French-

man named Regnier, who never filled any public position and whom no one had heard of before this time, wrote to the Empress on September 12th, submitting for her consideration a project of Imperial restoration, the principal basis of which was the return of the Regency to France, the conclusion of peace with Germany and the meeting of the Chambers under the protection of the army at Metz. On the 14th, Regnier went to Hastings and asked for an audience; but the Empress declined to receive him. Thereupon he explained his plans to M. Lebreton, husband of one of the ladies of the household, going into every detail of his project. Immediately the outside world who were in the secret, and especially those in the private circle, wondered whether Regnier was acting on his own initiative, or with the connivance and under the direction of the Prussian embassy at London. The latter solution always seemed to the Emperor and the Empress to be the correct one, first because it was characteristic of Bismarck to have recourse to clandestine negotiations which could afterwards be disavowed if they did not succeed, and secondly because we have now a proof of the fact in the memoirs of Count Bernstorff, Prussian ambassador in London at the moment of the war of 1870.

When the Empress refused him an audience, Regnier declared that it was a mistake to treat him in this way and that he or another person "should have been, as early as yesterday, in personal communication with Count Bismarck, not officially, perhaps, but certainly confidentially and secretly." The same day the Chancellor made known to Jules Favre, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Gov-

ernment of National Defense his willingness to receive him. This coincidence should be carefully noted. On the one hand, Bismarck declares that he will treat with none but the Imperial Government, and yet at the same moment, adds that there is not time to lose, as he is negotiating with the Parisian Government! This was Bismarck's method both before and after the war; in fact, it is to this reprehensible system that the war should be attributed. The impartial historian of the future, like many who even write to-day, will unquestionably take this view of the man and his work.

The Empress absolutely refused to converse with Regnier, and he then announced his intention of leaving for Wilhelmshöhe where he said he would offer his services to the imprisoned Emperor. He even asked to be given something which would facilitate his access to Napoleon; that, for instance, the Prince Imperial should write a few words on a photograph of Hastings. M. Filon, the Prince's tutor, finally yielded to the man's importunities, in spite of the Empress' desire that no heed should be paid to him, and the Prince Imperial wrote at the bottom of a photograph the following lines: "My dear Papa, I send you these views of Hastings; I hope they will please you"; and signed it.[1]

[1] In the Paris *Siècle*, of May 9, 1908, M. Elie Peyron published an article entitled "Bazaine et l'Impératrice," in which he states, quoting the *Moniteur Universel*, Regnier and Jules Favre, as authorities, that it was the Empress who signed these words. Thereupon M. Filon was asked if this were true, and he answered: "It was the Prince Imperial who wrote some words on the photograph sent to the Emperor and which is supposed to have served as Regnier's credentials to Bismarck. Instead of aiding Regnier in any way, the Empress gave orders that the door should be shut against him and that there should be no communication whatsoever with him. Consequently Jules Favre simply lied when he attributed to the Empress the inscription on the photograph."

As soon as Regnier got possession of this photograph, he started, but instead of going into Wilhelmshöhe, went to France and stopped at Ferrières, a town not far from Paris where Baron Rothschild has a magnificent castle in which Bismarck and Jules Favre carried on important negotiations at this time. Was this Regnier a Prussian agent, or did he pass himself off as "an agent of the Empress-Regent?" However this may be, he was immediately received by Bismarck who listened to his plans for an Imperial restoration. Regnier expressed a desire to aid in the negotiation of the treaty of peace and dwelt on the difficulties which existed,—one of the two governments having the power but not the right, while the other had the right but not the power, for a diplomatic act of this kind. In the end, Bismarck promised to give Regnier a passport, took leave of him, but kept the photograph signed by the Prince Imperial, and a few minutes later, the photograph was shown to Jules Favre. Here was proof that negotiations were on foot with the Regency!

The same evening the negotiations with the minister of September 4th having failed, Bismarck had another chat with Regnier, who no longer talked of going to Wilhelmshöhe, but proposed to start for Metz in order to secure Bazaine's approval of his plans. The idea was approved of by Bismarck, who informed Regnier that the passport which he had, permitted him to circulate freely through all parts of the country occupied by the German army. Regnier reached Metz September 23rd, and was immediately received at the headquarters of the German army, by Prince Frederick Charles, who had been informed of his coming by Bismarck. The

Frenchman was authorized to cross the lines and that same evening Regnier was with Marshal Bazaine.

Since the battle of St. Privat, Bazaine's determination to remain under Metz with his army had become more and more firm. The council of war, held at Grimont between the commanders of the various army corps, led to the same conclusion. Nevertheless, a sortie was attempted in the direction of Thionville, on August 30th, when the news of Marshal MacMahon's advance reached Bazaine. A furious struggle was the result, and at nightfall the French troops had seized the first picket line of the enemy. On the following morning, however, the conquered ground was abandoned owing to the reinforcement of the Prussian corps. This was the last important operation accomplished by the army at Metz. Why was no other effort made to escape? Why did not Bazaine, when he heard of the disaster of Sedan, make an heroic attempt to fight his way out, instead of beginning to negotiate? It is hard to answer these questions. The two theories—breaking through or negotiating—are open to discussion. From subsequent events and the court-martial proceedings, it would appear that Bazaine intended to reserve his strength as his army still was capable of playing a considerable part in the drama which had not yet reached its climax. But for whom was he reserving his strength? For France, for the Emperor, or for himself? Here again is a question that it is not easy to solve, though the Emperor had his own opinion on this important point, which, however, as it might have been wrong and the Marshal was still living—the Emperor died

in 1873 and Bazaine in 1888—he preferred never to make public. But as both are now dead, this objection is removed.

The Paris revolution troubled Bazaine. The newspapers which reached him painted the situation in darkest colors,—an insurrectionary government trying to stem the storm, disorder everywhere, an imprisoned emperor, and a regent who for good and sufficient reasons was not disposed to negotiate. Was it not the psychological moment for an ambitious man like Bazaine to play the strong cards which he had in his hand? At this juncture, he did not even hesitate to seek enlightenment concerning the state of affairs in France from Prince Frederick Charles himself, the nephew of King William, who commanded the German forces on his front. To the first request of information, the Prussian general immediately replied by a letter in which one reads: "Your Excellency will find me ready and authorized to give any information you may desire?" and the news sent later by the Prince was confirmed by a number of the *Indépendant Rémois*—a Reims journal—which shortly afterwards reached Bazaine. There could no longer be any doubt regarding the desire of the Prussian commanders to enter into negotiations with the chief of the army of Metz, who was much impressed by these overtures, which, perhaps he may have courted. Yet he had sufficient victuals in the town to last till the end of October, which, however, did not prevent him from beginning to eat his cavalry horses!

At this moment arrived the irrepressible Regnier. Representing himself as a negotiator coming from, or, at any rate armed with the authorization of the

Regency, Regnier posed as the saviour of the army, offering the Marshal the opportunity to escape the responsibility of treating. Thereupon, Bazaine not only received Regnier with evident haste, but, acting in an unaccountably careless manner, told him many important facts concerning the state of the army. Thus, a man unknown the day before, and whose very name was unheard of in Metz till that moment, was put in possession of most valuable details, and suddenly found himself in a position to judge this very serious situation, to form an independent opinion of his own concerning it, and even, perhaps, to influence subsequent current events by means of this opinion. It must be admitted, however, that an appearance of genuineness was given to Regnier's mission by the facility with which he had traversed the Prussian lines. He cleverly expatiated on the negotiations in which he had been mixed up and on the part which the army of Metz was called upon to play therein. He insisted, also, on the necessity of sending either Marshal Canrobert or General Bourbaki to England, in order to decide the Regency, to sign a treaty of peace. According to Regnier everything depended upon the manner in which the negotiation should be conducted.

Marshal Bazaine allowed himself to be the more easily convinced of all this, because he himself was seeking a means of getting out of trouble. He held that the best interests of France demanded that a peace be made and that if his army could escape from Metz, he would certainly be able to maintain order in the interior and enforce respect for the clauses of the future convention. So, in order to show that he approved of this plan and that he was

willing to advance to the supposed intentions of the Regent, he put his signature below that of the Prince Imperial on the Hastings photograph. The following morning, Regnier was again admitted to the Prussian headquarters, and Prince Frederick Charles handed him two telegrams from Count Bismarck informing him that the truce then under negotiation with Jules Favre had not been signed, and that it was agreed that a French general should receive authorization to leave Metz for England, where he would be received by the Regent to whom he would relate what had been proposed and settled. Marshal Canrobert refused to undertake this mission, but General Bourbaki agreed to do so. It was even decided, in accordance with the agreement entered into with Prince Frederick Charles, that Bourbaki would be sent to England disguised as a doctor! The Emperor said later: "That Canrobert should have declined to participate in such a wild, not to say comic, scheme, was not surprising; it was simply one more proof of the superiority of his intelligence. But what is surprising is that an officer of Bourbaki's talent should have laid aside his epaulets for a pestle. He was not, however, the only political empiric at that troubled moment. He may have lost his head but he kept his character."

In the meanwhile, the Empress had left Hastings for Chislehurst near London, and when Bourbaki arrived there on the 27th and appeared before the exiled court, he saw on every face the greatest astonishment. All were stupefied at the use which Regnier had made of the photograph signed by the Prince Imperial. "You have been deceived," cried every one. "You have been deceived," the Empress

echoed, when she received the rather crest-fallen general. Bourbaki, however, remained a long time with the Empress telling her among many other things, of the distressed condition of the army in Metz. But she refused to treat, though much moved and affected by all she heard, and finally cut the conversation short. The following morning, however, General Bourbaki returned undismayed to the charge, only to find the Empress as firmly resolved as the day before not to enter into negotiations which she did not feel entitled to undertake. The regency was fully determined not to hamper the Government of National Defense by treating with any one behind its back, and the Empress therefore categorically refused to grant what Bourbaki had been commissioned to ask of her.

Often since the Empress explained her action at that date. She knew that many blamed her for the course she then pursued, and that they regretted that she had not acted more independently. But her reply was always as already stated in these pages that she did not think herself authorized to go so far, because, though still regent in name, she did not consider herself so in fact, and she was desirous further that none could reproach her with having in any way added to the difficulties of the home situation; for, it should be remembered, that at this moment the "War in the Provinces" was under full headway. Moreover, the Empress felt that the Emperor, though a prisoner, had an opinion of his own on the subject, and that he should direct the negotiations, if there were to be any. In a word instead of acting as a sovereign of olden times would have done and deliberately cutting the knot at the

risk of creating further troubles of every kind and intestine warfare, I think the Empress showed herself quite uninfluenced by dynastic questions and strove in every way to create no embarrassment for those then engaged in fighting the battles of France. "Her attitude was that of a very modern sovereign," a devoted friend has written, "and French above all." For this reason the Empress would not act by herself, although personally she took great interest in all the events of the hour. But by describing the terrible trials of the army of Metz, General Bourbaki destroyed her last illusions and hopes in that direction. Until then the belief had prevailed that the army of the Rhine was capable of playing an important part and of healing, to a certain extent at least, the old wounds of the rival parties in France.

Though a sentiment of patriotism, as the Empress understood it, prevented her from personally undertaking negotiations leading towards a peace, nothing prevented her from seconding in the interests of France, the views of the Government of National Defense. This was the moment when M. Thiers was making an official diplomatic tour through Europe in the hope of obtaining the help of the powers in favor of prostrate France. It will be remembered that the venerable statesman was well received everywhere but could obtain no solid promises of aid. So, thinking she might be of some little assistance at this juncture the Empress wrote on September 28th to the Emperor of Austria, she had a right to suppose and to hope that an effort on her part would not be without some influence on the sovereign who some weeks before had promised his alli-

ance to the Imperial Government. And here is the text of what the Empress wrote on this occasion:

"Misfortune has befallen us, Sire. The imprisoned Emperor can do nothing at this time for his country. As for myself, far away from France owing to circumstances quite foreign to my wish, I am a mere spectator of a struggle which breaks my heart. But I cannot be silent in the face of so much pain and ruin. I feel sure that in addressing myself to your Majesty, you will understand that my only thought is for France, and that it is for my country alone that my heart, so cruelly tried, beats and hopes. I trust that your Majesty will use every effort to preserve my country against exigencies which might humiliate her, and to aid in obtaining a peace which shall respect the integrity of our territory."

A member of the Empress' circle has made the following comments, here published for the first time, on this letter: "M. Thiers, who was engaged in trying to render acceptable to Europe the members of the Government of National Defense and to get the foreign powers to recognize that government, might have, and in fact should have made good use of this letter of the Empress. Was not this generous step, this unexpected support, a striking proof of the patriotism shown by the partisans of the Empire in submitting to the new régime? M. Thiers might have laid stress on this fact, might have pointed out that a government sustained by the former sovereigns was not an ephemeral government and should be treated by the powers as a true representative of France. If the Empress was ready to aid this body, why should the chancelleries refuse them support or to render their task more easy?

But M. Thiers did not take this view of the situation. Instead of calling attention to the generosity of the Empress, he persistently inveighed, with all the powers of his biting tongue, against the fallen system. He tried by every means he could command to destroy the reputation of the Empire in the eyes of the various courts which he visited, to lay at its door all the faults, and to hold it responsible for all the evils which had befallen the country."

When, during the very first days of September, the Empire was tottering to its fall and M. Thiers was asked to come to its aid, he held back, exclaiming: "It is too late." But another opponent of the Empire, General Changarnier, adopted quite a different attitude at this crisis as I have shown in another chapter of this volume. Nor should it be forgotten in this connection, that M. Thiers and the parliamentary opposition are directly responsible for an earlier act that led to the final disaster. When it was proposed to modify the military law and increase the strength of the army, M. Thiers opposed the bill brought in by Marshal Niel, the then Minister of War. He made a party cry of this augmentation of the military establishment and now, in September and October, 1870, he was continuing his work of destruction and opposition. Above all things, Thiers at this time feared lest the Empire should arise from its smouldering ashes and again become the necessary form of government; lest at this very moment it was holding itself in reserve for the propitious hour to act. So all his efforts were concentrated to prove that the temporary government was to become the final government, and he alone was capable of directing the destinies of the unfortunate land.

It was poor policy to depreciate the fallen system in order to extol the chance government sprung from an insurrection, and it was a mistake and a grave fault to lay before the eyes of the nations the dissensions ruling in the heart of France. These other nations had lived on the best of terms with the Empire. Why, therefore, throw mud at the dynasty? It was wounding the feelings of the sovereigns of these other nations who had shown sympathy for the régime, and was, consequently a bad method for obtaining support from them.

But, to leave M. Thiers and to return to Regnier, the scaffolding which the latter had run up was quickly pulled to the ground and it became necessary to have more precise grounds on which to negotiate. Bismarck now asked to be shown something more solid than photographs signed by the Prince Imperial and Marshal Bazaine, which, though useful as baits while playing with Jules Favre, could not be employed continually. So, as soon as the result of General Bourbaki's mission was known at Prussian headquarters, Regnier was notified to leave. But Bismarck had not abandoned the idea of treating with the Empire; only, seeing that nothing could be done with the Regency, he now turned towards Wilhelmshöhe where was the imprisoned Emperor.

Napoleon III could not refuse to enter into conversation and study the question; but before doing anything, he wished to ascertain the basis on which it was proposed he should treat with Germany. So a note bearing on this subject was sent on September 26th to the headquarters of the King of Prussia. The Emperor gave it as his opinion that there could

be no final solution of the conflict without either the complete ruin of one of the two adversaries or their close reconciliation. The payment of a war indemnity and the dismantling of fortresses which would become henceforth useless were admitted to be fundamental conditions of the future peace. But there should be no cession of territory. The future peace could be made lasting by the razing of certain fortifications which would render any war of revenge impossible. This seemed to be a practical and acceptable solution of the problem, the international interests being treated as they ought to have been. It is doubtful, however, whether it would have been easy to get it accepted in France where it would probably have been opposed by the enemies of the last régime, who would have put party concerns above patriotism. But the matter never came squarely before the country, the Government of National Defense being persuaded that Jules Favre could obtain more acceptable terms than anybody else could.

After Sedan, Bismarck would, no doubt, have consented to the conditions formulated by the Emperor. But the sovereign who had just snapped his sword in two in order to stop the disastrous conflict and save the life of fifty thousand men, was now no longer in a position to come to the front in this connection. Three weeks later, Bismarck was more exacting in his dealing with the Emperor. When the siege of Paris became imminent and the capitulation of Metz was no longer a mere possibility but simply a question of days, Bismarck would not consent to waive the question of territorial compensation. In the meantime, the condition of the army

of Metz becoming more and more critical a council of war was decided upon, which met on October 10th and resolved to commence negotiations with the enemy in the hope of saving the army by an honorable capitulation. At the same time it was decided that arms would not be laid down unless terms could be obtained that were perfectly compatible with honor and military duty. Thereupon, General Boyer was chosen to proceed to the chief headquarters of the German army and ascertain on what conditions the French army might leave Metz with the honors of war.

On October 14th Marshal Bazaine's envoy arrived at Versailles, which had now become the chief headquarters of the invading army. At first Bismarck replied to General Boyer that if his mission concerned a simple military convention, General von Moltke had fully made up his mind to demand a capitulation whose terms would be as onerous as those of Sedan. General Boyer made a strong protest against this proposal and declared that the army of Metz would never accept such conditions. Then Bismarck became a little more conciliatory and said: "Well, we'll see; I may, after consultation with the King, bring to bear on the situation certain political considerations." He then went on to explain, that in his opinion, "it was high time to sign a treaty of peace, an act much desired both by Germany and France." "But," he added, "in order to obtain a valid treaty, it is essential that we negotiate with an established form of government, capable of carrying out the clauses of such a document. The King is unwilling to treat with the Government of National Defense, which has shown that its word is not good. In

fact he is absolutely decided not to negotiate with the Government of Paris and still less with that of Tours." (It should be explained that at this moment—October, 1870—Paris was surrounded by the German army and a part of the French Defense Government was shut up in the capital, while another part was sitting at Tours.)

Continuing his conversation with General Boyer, Bismárck went on to say that the German government was not hostile to the Imperial dynasty, a form of government which according to his way of thinking was most suited to the peculiar character of the French nation. And yet, only a short time before Bismarck had declared that Prussia was not fighting against France, but against the Empire! It should be noted by the way, how cleverly he adapts his language, throughout these long and perplexing negotiations, to suit each new interlocutor. He further adds: "We do not wish to make the mistake committed in 1815, when France was forced to accept a government chosen by her enemies. This time, as far as we are concerned, the nation shall choose its government, or at any rate, approve of the one set up."

The Chancellor went on and painted in the darkest colors the home situation of France since September 4th; declared the raw levies in the French provinces incapable of turning the tide, showed that the rôle of the army of Metz was to come to the support of the Legislative Body of the Empire, to reestablish order and a regular form of government. But, he stated, it was quite impossible for the king to grant the army of Metz this free rôle so long as no treaty of peace had been signed, and hence the ne-

cessity for the Regent to sign a treaty. On the other hand, if this were done, the army of Metz must agree to maintain the Imperial Government and in this connection, Bismarck questioned General Boyer concerning the feelings of that army towards the Emperor. The general replied that the army was in no way compromised with the Government of National Defense, that it had never recognized the new form of government and had remained faithful to the Emperor to whom it had sworn allegiance. These assertions certainly had weight with the Chancellor, but he pointed out that dissenting voices might be raised as time went on. He consequently insisted on the absolute necessity of there being some public declaration on the part of the army in favor of the regent. Then General Boyer in his turn showed that what the Chancellor demanded was in the nature of a pronunciamento. He would make no promise to obtain a declaration of this sort, and, in fact, postively declined to even propose such a thing to his brothers-in-arms. Bismarck continued to press it and said: "An act of this kind on the part of the army is indispensable, for the Empress would very naturally refuse to open negotiations if she did not feel herself supported by the army pledged to carry out what was agreed to. You must obtain her Majesty's signature to the preliminaries of the peace treaty, and then the army of Metz can leave with honor, taking arms, cannon and ammunition. And, furthermore, the city will be left unmolested." I may remark that Bismarck's interpretation of the Empress' views was quite gratuitous, to say the least.

After this conversation, Bismarck conferred with

the King, and on the following day again met the French envoy, when he declared that at his suggestion King William had abandoned the idea of the capitulation of the army and the surrender of Metz and would agree to sign a treaty of peace with the Regent on the terms enumerated the day before. He closed with this reiteration: "Get the Empress to sign the preliminary documents, get the army to manifest its firm intention of upholding the government of the Empress and then we will grant you the honors of war." General Boyer repeated what he had already said to the Chancellor, viz., that he was sure the army would refuse to make such a manifesto, and he then asked to be told the conditions which would be laid before the Regent. Bismarck, however, refused to make known these conditions to any one but the Empress or a plenipotentiary duly authorized by her. But from what had occurred during the past few weeks and from what Bismarck had already declared on more than one occasion, it was easy to imagine what would be the Chancellor's conditions.

If, while the troops at Metz were still capable of inflicting serious loss on the Germans, Bismarck had been negotiating with a regularly established government, he would no doubt have shown himself less exacting in his conferences with Jules Favre at Ferrières and with M. Thiers after the capitulation. Even at that date, Prussia would have been content with Alsace and three billions of francs. If the Empress could have seen her way then to signing a peace, she would have saved Lorraine and two billions, and perhaps a part of Alsace also. But could the Regency accept the conditions laid down by

Bismarck? Was it possible for the Empress, for instance, to agree to the clause calling for a public ratification of her powers by the army of Metz? The best answer is given by what immediately happened at Metz.

General Boyer returned to Metz bearing Bismarck's ultimatum, and a council of war was immediately summoned. But not one vote was recorded in favor of the public manifesto which had been proposed; on the contrary, all the assembled generals were unanimously of the opinion that such an act would be extremely dangerous. Nevertheless, it was desirable to know how loyal to the Empire were the troops, and just how far they could be counted on to obey orders. So it was decided that the colonels should be questioned concerning the state of mind of their officers, and a second meeting was called for the same evening to hear their report on this important point, when Marshals Canrobert and Leboeuf and Generals Frossard and Desvaux unhesitatingly declared that all the officers were ready to obey their superiors and that full reliance might be placed on rank and file. This interesting fact should be borne in mind by those who would correctly understand the political situation at this moment. The enemies of the Empire are only too prone to assert that in the autumn of 1870, it was abandoned by officers and army. What might not have been done if all France had stood by the only legal government which existed in France at this critical juncture?

At this same council of war opinions were much divided as to the wisdom of sending to the Regent an officer with mission to try and decide the Empress to

treat. Some of the generals were opposed to all idea of giving any political color to their action, while others pointed out that if the proposed negotiations failed, it would be impossible to have recourse to arms as the final arbiter. Many different opinions were expressed, but no firm decision was arrived at. But General Changarnier carried all with him, when he declared with much warmth that "the only means of salvation not only for the army but for France, was for them to openly rally round the Empress." This veteran of our African armies, who had become reconciled to the Empire which he had opposed ever since 1840, saw very clearly the real situation at this moment. At Metz, he was a shining example of abnegation and devotion and brought to the council-board invaluable advice and the fruit of his wide experience. A little later on he was properly intrusted with important negotiations, and threw into his mission all the zeal of his broad nature.

The upshot of the council was that General Boyer was ordered to leave immediately for Chislehurst, where he arrived on October 22nd. No time was to be lost. Events were following one another in rapid succession; Metz could not possibly hold out much longer. The general was forthwith admitted to the Empress' presence and he pleaded warmly for her intervention. "You alone can save the country," he exclaimed, "by promptly accepting Bismarck's proposals. If you consent, you may rely on the support of the army. I am especially commissioned by Marshal Bazaine and the generals to assure you of this fact."

The Empress fully understood that at so critical a moment, she could not refuse her intervention.

But before committing herself in any way, she was anxious to know Bismarck's conditions, so that the interests of the country should not be sacrificed for the salvation of the army of Metz. The Empress therefore telegraphed to the German Chancellor, informing him of her willingness to enter into negotiations, and, without in any way indicating what were her ulterior intentions, she asked for a fifteen days' armistice with permission to revictual Metz; and she further requested to be informed concerning the basis on which the preliminary formalities for a conclusion of peace were to be established. In the meanwhile, the Empress called together her council. There were present M. Rouher, the Duke de Persigny, the Marquis de la Valette, M. Henri Chevreau, the last minister of the interior, and Baron Jerome David. Before this council which was presided over by the Empress, General Boyer appeared and again urged prompt and radical action. "In the name of the marshals and the generals commanding in Metz," exclaimed the ardent officer, "I beg of the regent to consent to save the army by subscribing to the conditions laid down by Count Bismarck." "What is the nature of these conditions," was asked. But General Boyer did not know their tenor nor could Count Bernstorff, Prussian Minister in London, throw any light on the subject; and the chancellor's reply to the Empress' telegram had not come. So the day was spent in great anxiety, the Empress steadily declining to sign anything, so long as she remained in ignorance of the Prussian demands. At this moment, the Empress was occupying a house in Albemarle street, lent to her by Lord Cowley, who was for fifteen years dur-

ing the Second Empire British Ambassador at Paris; and thither came Count Bernstorff to confer with her. "I can assure your Majesty," he said, "that Prussia will certainly be less exacting if dealing with the Regency than if dealing with any other form of government." This was encouraging, it was even complimentary, but it was not very precise; what the Empress wanted at this moment was something that was particularly precise. So the Regent now wrote direct to the King of Prussia, so as to have answers from two sources. She appealed to his Majesty's kind heart and to his soldierly generosity, but was, at the same time, careful to let it be seen that she had firm convictions of her own; and she closed with these words, "A knowledge of your demands is the indispensable condition of the continuation of the negotiations."

Bismarck's answer was received on the 24th. He refused to permit the revictualing of Metz during the armistice. But he evaded referring to the conditions on which peace was to be concluded. So the Empress sent another telegram confined to this all-important point. She still felt that she could do nothing while we remained so completely in the dark. But the Chancellor, repeating what he had said to General Boyer, would not advance one step or give one word of explanation until he had a duly signed document to prove that the preliminaries were at length under way. Did he wish to make use of such a paper in order to obtain, later, more than he would have asked at an earlier date? Or did he wish to employ it as a means of bringing to negotiation the Government of National Defense, thus keeping both parties in suspense, meanwhile? This was very

probably his object, though there is no positive proof of the fact. The only thing certain was that Bismarck would make no positive statements as to his conditions which might later on embarrass him in accomplishing the real aim he had in view. Thus he said in so many words on the 25th, in his reply to the Empress' second telegram. The text was as follows: "The demand which you make would not assure you nor us of the maintenance of the peace we might negotiate. Bezaine's army has not said how it means to act and we should probably be obliged by our own arms and possibly against the army of Metz to undertake to carry out the execution of the treaty. The king will treat only on the conditions which I have explained to General Boyer and not one of which has yet been fulfilled." On the same day came a letter from the king bearing out the statement of the telegram. "I can do nothing," he said, "so long as the Metz army remains silent."

A person who stands high in the counsels of the Empire makes this very correct comment on this episode: "Bismarck evidently wished the Regent to hand herself over to him completely bound. He thought she would be satisfied with the mere fact that he preserved her throne for her. No doubt the Chancellor was surprised by the disinterestedness of the Empress, who put before dynastic questions the welfare of the country. He found that on this point her mind was fully made up; she would sacrifice nothing in order to gain some personal advantage. It was very doubtful indeed if any agreement could be arrived at with her. And what made matters worse was that the Empress felt that she was living

in the midst of a tissue of intrigue, snares and falsehoods. She was continually asking herself what the exact truth could be; what it could be that Bismarck really wanted. In a word, was there any way of bringing about a peace under acceptable conditions, conditions from which the honor of the country would not suffer? This was the question that the Empress put to herself in vain."

While these negotiations were pending in London with Count Bernstorff, and while this correspondence was being exchanged with Bismarck and the Prussian headquarters, the Empress was more desirous than ever of obtaining reliable information. So she determined to send to Versailles, where were the German headquarters, a special envoy, who might get to the source of things and communicate with Bismarck in person. The Empress selected for this purpose, Theophile Gautier, son of the poet of the same name. He had held high official positions, was the confidant of M. Rouher, was very intelligent, discreet and trustworthy, and entirely devoted to the Imperial cause. M. Gautier was to be furnished with a letter addressed to the King, which he was to put into Bismarck's hands and which was to open the way to an interview with the Chancellor, when it was hoped the conversation would be brought on to the ground of the pending negotiations. M. Rouher had fully instructed the envoy as to the exact conditions on which the Regency stood ready to treat, and he was furnished with the replies he was to make to the anticipated objections of the Chancellor. One of the persons who accompanied this mission sent the Empress the following report of its incidents and the gist of this report is here

published for the first time, with a few comments and explanations introduced here and there:

On October 10th M. Gautier left London for Brussels, by the way of Dover and Ostend, and proceeded to Bouillon, where he was to be given a passport which was to allow him to pass through the German lines and where he was also to receive the letter addressed to the King. But at Bouillon he learned that there would be a delay of forty-eight hours in the furnishing of the passport; so he had the time to visit Sedan, the theater of the recent disaster, and returning to Bouillon, found there Count Clary, who was attached to the person of the Prince Imperial, and who brought the letter to the King. Awaiting him also was Dr. Evans, the American dentist who had aided the Empress to escape in September, and who came from Germany with the passport. The sad and tedious journey through the German lines was accomplished partly by train and partly in carriages, in the midst of many obstacles and cruel reminders of devastation and ruin. Versailles was finally reached on Sunday, October 23rd, and M. Gautier was received into a French family, whose hospitality he enjoyed during his sojourn at German headquarters. Immediately after breakfast, he went to Jessé Villa, in the Rue de Provence which was then occupied by Count Bismarck, where he was received by Count Hatzfeldt, who, before the war, had been secretary of the Prussian legation at Paris, who arranged that he should meet the Chancellor the next afternoon at four o'clock.

The house in which were carried on these negotiations and many others, including the first undertaken by Jules Favre and extending to the final ones

with Thiers, who was the chief actor on the French side, was situated nearly at the corner of the Boulevard de la Reine and the Rue de Provence, in one of the most peaceful quarters of the old city. The Empress had it pointed out to her when she motored to Versailles one afternoon in recent years. The villa, which is now of historic interest, is surrounded by a large garden and separated from the street by a high wall, which is surmounted by a railing, and pierced by a small door. A balcony and veranda give a certain air of comfort to the edifice which cannot aspire to the title of castle and could scarcely be regarded as the residence of a man of wealth.

By a small winding staircase of this modest habitation, M. Gautier was escorted next day, at four, by a non-commissioned officer, into a contracted antechamber from which opened several doors. One of these was ajar; and into a small room, plainly furnished and hung with gray paper, the envoy was finally introduced. M. Gautier was scarcely seated, when Bismarck appeared from a neighboring room. What struck one most at the first sight of this extraordinary man was his high stature, his broad shoulders, which appeared all the broader from the peculiar cut of his tunic; then you remarked his red, fat face and the heavy jaw which gave such a ferocious expression to his countenance. The shock which his first appearance gave you was somewhat mitigated by the cordiality and even joviality of his manner, which reminded one of a friendly ogre, anxious to please his visitors. His voice was rough. He spoke slowly in very correct language, articulating carefully, and clothed his thoughts in a clear and picturesque style.

M. Gautier handed the Count the letter which he had brought for the King. The chancellor inquired concerning his journey, asking especially if he had met with proper courtesy while crossing the German outposts, and then, without any further delay, broached the subject that was uppermost in their minds. He told M. Gautier all that had occurred since his departure from London, on October 10th, gave a sort of short history of General Boyer's mission and summed up its result. He explained how that officer had first visited Versailles, and had then gone on to London; how he had declared that the leaders of the Metz army were quite devoted to the Emperor but before promising their support to any measure, they wished to make sure that the line was equally well disposed, which fact could not be ascertained, they held, unless they were in a position to inform the army of the existence, or at least of the imminence, of a treaty between the King and the Empress-regent.

One of the clauses of the treaty proposed by General Boyer, Bismarck went on to say, authorized the French army to withdraw to neutral territory, where the various governmental bodies, as they stood before the revolution of September 4th, would determine the form of government to be adopted in the future. But as Bismarck persisted in his declaration that it was impossible to treat if he had no guarantee of the execution of the clauses, while this sole guarantee was the army of Metz, surrounded at this very moment by the German army and evidently not in a position to escape—it was evident that all these discussions were but a part of a vicious circle from which it was impossible to find an issue.

Moreover, Bismarck continued at this very moment, Count Bernstorff telegraphed that General Boyer considered his mission as ended, and Prince Frederick Charles, before Metz, had to be consulted as to what turn he thought ought to be given to the negotiations. He, Bismarck, was naturally opposed to any agreement being come to then, for the situation at Metz was growing worse and worse, and it was plain that the town must very shortly capitulate. Therefore, it was not to be expected that he would favor any negotiations which might delay this great disaster to the enemy. That was undoubtedly the unsurmountable obstacle, the real reason why M. Gautier at Versailles, like the Regency in London, could make no advance. One may ask indeed, if all these negotiations which Bismarck appeared to desire with the Regent were not intended solely to alarm the Government of National Defense,—the Chancellor pulling the strings and the puppets dancing at his will. He knew that some day in the very near future, he would have an easy task in dealing with the men of September 4th who now indignantly refused all his proposals, and that he would make their present resistance the pretext for demanding far harder terms. The friends of the Emperor all saw this very plainly. It was only the headstrong republicans who seemed to be blind, if not something worse.

If there had been a sincere desire to negotiate, why was so much time lost on M. Gautier's journey from London to Versailles? Once on the Continent, if he had been properly escorted he could easily, by forced stages, have arrived much sooner. Instead of seconding General Boyer's mission by a

rapid delivery of the extreme concessions which we could make M. Gautier appeared to really arrive after the battle was lost and it seemed highly improbable that the half-buried question could now be resuscitated. But the new envoy determined to leave no stone unturned in his efforts to carry out his important mission. So when the Chancellor asked him to go over the clauses of the proposed treaty, as it came from the Regency, M. Gautier set himself to the task. The chief elements of the list of concessions made by the Regent were the following, and as they have not always been given with exactitude, their recapitulation is of some historical interest.

The fortifications round Strasburg were to be razed and the various military establishments in the town were to be closed or used for other purposes, while the city itself was to be declared a free municipality, dependent neither on France nor on Germany, and surrounded by a neutralized territory sufficiently large to provide for the financial and material needs of the inhabitants. In a word, it was to be placed in the same category as Hamburg or Frankfort before 1866. Except the portion of the department thus ceded to the free city of Strasburg, the rest of the Lower Rhine would remain French territory. The departments of the Meurthe, the Moselle and the Upper Rhine would remain French. France would pay Germany an indemnity of two billions of francs. In this connection M. Gautier reminded the Chancellor of the enormous expenses to which France had already been put and those which she had still to meet, and ventured to express the opinion that the conqueror might, under such

circumstances, consider himself safe from all power of revenge on the part of the vanquished in view of the weakness which must result from all these heavy drains on its finances. As it was readily imagined that Prussia would not be contented with a small cession of territory, it was proposed to give her Cochin China, a prosperous colony, which had been so well administered that it more than paid for itself. When the words Cochin China were pronounced, Bismarck feigned surprise, and in a moment of humility or modesty, doubtless assumed for the occasion, he exclaimed: "What! Cochin China; why that is a pretty large morsel for us to digest. We are not rich enough to possess such luxuries as colonies."

Thus ended the first interview. At its close, Bismarck was summoned to the King; but before going, he asked M. Gautier to return the same evening at half past eight. When that hour came, M. Gautier found at his door a carriage and pair which drove him to the villa in the Rue de Provence. He was ushered into the dining room, situated on the ground floor and opening on to the garden. Dinner was just over. On the table were two candelabra with three branches each; but the light being insufficient, a half dozen candles had been stuck into champagne bottles and placed about the room. M. Gautier was struck by this rather theatrical reminder of Wallenstein's camp. (He referred to it in some detail when giving the Empress an account of his mission.) The officers and secretaries who were in the room when M. Gautier arrived, immediately retired and the Chancellor forthwith took up the conversation where

he had left it a few hours before. "I have seen the King," he said, "and we both consider the proposed conditions as totally inacceptable. We especially object to the clause concerning Alsace. This would make it possible for France, at a date more or less distant, to assume once more an offensive attitude towards Germany, whose military organization is of a purely defensive nature."

M. Gautier then went a step further in the way of concessions. The Departments of the Lower and Upper Rhine, forming the province of Alsace, might be erected into a neutral state for a period of five years, when the inhabitants would vote on their future nationality, and declare whether they wished to remain French, be annexed to Germany or become an independent and distinct state. In any case Alsace would be deprived of her fortifications, be left only a sufficient military force to insure public order and would be neutralized. M. Gautier laid stress on the self-government possibilities of Alsace, and pointed out how developed her population was in the spirit of local and municipal government, so that there was every ground for believing that within a short period, the province would assume customs and sentiments similar to those existing in Switzerland, its neighbor and former ally. Bismarck did not seem to share this view and felt that such a state would merely form a sort of out-post for France, a continual menace to Germany. He held that it would be difficult to obtain its neutrality, as no government would be in a position to guarantee this. Then, suddenly changing his tone, he added in a more familiar manner: "Why, you must know that if the King and I were to return to Ger-

many, without bringing Alsace with us, we would be received with a volley of stones!"

For some time it had been evident that Prussia was bent on seizing Alsace, and now there could no longer be any doubt of the fact, as Bismarck had spoken out plainly. As M. Gautier well expressed it,—under the apparently sympathetic tone of the Chancellor, he really thought in this wise: "I respect the Empress and regret the misfortunes of France, but I can't help them. We are forced by fate to do this. It grieves me, but I must do it all the same." After sketching his own plan for the organization of Alsace and a part of Lorraine, Bismarck added: "The loss of those provinces will not diminish the strength of France. She will still remain a first class Power." Finally, M. Gautier withdrew after a long conversation, but the Chancellor asked him not to leave Versailles immediately, as he might have some communication to make to him. On the third day, as M. Gautier was leaving the dinner table he heard military music of a triumphant and joyous nature, and on inquiry learned that the German army was celebrating the fall of Metz! And here ended M. Gautier's mission.

At the same time negotiations came to an end in London. Count Bernstorff declared that the "Empress would not make the necessary sacrifices." Some of her counselors might perhaps have been in favor of accepting Bismarck's conditions, but, after having first informed the Emperor what these conditions were, the Empress felt that she could not yield on the most important point of all, viz., the cession of territory. So this ended the matter.

But the news of General Boyer's mission had

reached the ears of the Government at Tours, where it caused great anxiety. Naturally, they did not wish a peace which would curtail their powers, and they dreaded still more a peace which should bring back the Emperor on the throne. Counting on her patriotism, they begged the Empress through the medium of a foreign diplomat, to do nothing which might complicate their own negotiations in the success of which they had much hope. Learning from independent sources that the Army of the Loire was not a myth and that it had acquired a certain amount of force, while a spirit of genuine patriotism seemed to have taken possession of the people, the Empress replied that she would do nothing to embarrass the Government of National Defense. Perhaps I may be allowed here to quote what a friend has said on this point: "It is certain that the men of September 4th were struck by the noble conduct of the Empress, and M. Tissot, their Chargé des Affaires at London was instructed to officially thank her. Though the Empress could not receive the envoy of an insurrectionary government, the fact that he was thus instructed speaks for itself."

And thus ended the Empress' efforts to bring about a peace in the autumn of 1870. When in March, 1871, the Emperor reached England and the Empress could talk over with him in detail the events of the past few weeks, the Emperor fully approved of the course which she had pursued in the midst of many complications and not infrequently in the midst of insidious intrigues. When the Prince Imperial reached years of manhood and had studied carefully the whole epoch of the war, he, too, I am happy to say, wholly commended his mother's acts

in the incidents just related, which was another great source of balm to the Empress, for she thus felt that she had the unquestioned support of her immediate family. If in some Bonapartist centers, her conduct met with criticism of various kinds, the Empress made it a rule to always respect this criticism, holding that at such an hour and in such a crisis several lines of action might have been taken. It is possible that the Regency did not select the right one, but the Empress at least selected the one that her conscience told her was the right one; and she was always ready to leave it to impartial history to decide whether she made a mistake and if the Empress did make a mistake, I am sure it will be declared by the same impartial history that the mistake was not an intentional one.

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